The Competent Church

F · A · Agar

Presented to
Bonebrake
Theological Seminary
Library
Dayton, Ohio

by

Mrs. Mary Miller

in memory of

Dr. J. Frank Miller

THE COMPETENT CHURCH

The Competent Church

A Study of Christian Competency and Church Efficiency

By
FREDERICK A. AGAR
Author of "Church Officers," "Help Those Women," "Stewardship of Life," Etc.

LIBRARY OF
Bonebrake Theological Seminary
260
A26
c.1
6,760

NEW YORK CHICAGO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1924, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

Printed in the United States of America

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 75 Princes Street

To My Wife,
Harriet Caldwell Agar

Introduction

THE local church has a vital place in the divine plan to win a world of lost souls to the path of righteousness and salvation. It is meant to be a factor in world affairs as well as in local life.

The local church has its strong points as well as its weaknesses. Its strength lies in its divine origin, in its ministry of an inspired Word which is the only cure for the ravages of sin, and finally in its exemplification of Christian fellowship and love. The weakness of the average local church is to be found in its worldliness, in its unprepared ministry, in its lack of thorough educational processes, in its slavish adherence to unscriptural, inefficient practices and precedents, and in its failure to train a lay leadership to help carry on its great tasks in the world of today.

Wherever used the word competent is meant to indicate a church that is "answering all the requirements" of its local situation. In other words, it is a church that is qualified to do the work required of it.

It is the purpose of this volume to present a study of the elements that are needed to produce a competent church. Inasmuch as the local church is made up of individuals, more or less attention will be given to the consideration of individual Christian competency. Some repetition will be encountered here and there in this book. There is reason for such repetition in the fact that certain outstanding conditions in local church life have varied causes and must therefore be considered from several different standpoints.

There is no expectation in the mind of the author that

the casual reader or church worker will altogether agree with the writer. It is his hope, however, to stir up the mind of all readers of this book so that they will examine themselves and the church of which they are a part. Then if each one will add some elements to his own daily living and service in the church life, it will help to meet more effectually the expectations of the Lord and Savior whose plan called for the institution of a local church, and for its maintenance upon a competent basis. The purposes of this volume will then have been realized.

F. A. A.

New York.

Contents

I. The Average Church 11
II. The Need of Spirituality 17
III. Unity Essential 20
IV. The Teaching Element 24
V. The Stewardship Element 29
VI. An Expectation Necessary 34
VII. The Need of Lay Leadership 38
VIII. The Sacrificial Element 43
IX. The Love That Wins 48
X. The Scientific Basis 53
XI. The Need of Organization 58
XII. A Matter of Money 63
XIII. The Enlistment Process 67
XIV. A Balanced Emphasis 72
XV. Some Minor Elements 77
XVI. Barriers 81
XVII. The Methods 87
Bibliography 93

I

THE AVERAGE CHURCH

Disagreeable Medicine—In childhood days most people have had the experience of being obliged to take some very disagreeable medicine. But in many cases when the bad tasting dose had been swallowed, a lump of sugar or a piece of candy was given the child to drive away the nasty taste of the medicine.

In this discussion, the unwelcome and quite disagreeable truth will be faced first in the hope that later on the study of a competent church will help to drive away the bad taste which will doubtless come while reading this chapter on "the average church" which frankly confronts the existing conditions in the great majority of local institutions. In all probability the reader's own church will come under this classification.

Growth of Church—Under prevailing conditions in the United States today, there has been and is now a rapidly growing population, but the percent of the people who have a definite relationship with and an abiding in the membership of a local church has not kept pace with the growth in population. This is not true of some individual communions or denominations, but they form the exception to the rule. Of course nominal membership is included but not adherents or families of members.

A Secondary Matter—With many people, Christianity has become a secondary matter. It is something to use in the distant future or in another world and it is not, therefore, the controlling force and factor in the life lived today. Christianity has become with many professed Christians a specific for times of trouble, or a sedative for

disturbed consciences, but is no longer a personal, permanent and persuasive walk with a Christ who is the Lord of their life.

Some Evidence—The evidence supporting this statement is to be found in the absence of a family altar in the great majority of church members' homes, or indeed any recognition of the Lord Christ as the head of the house. Not even a blessing is asked at the meals, in many a church member's home. Again proof is found in the small part of the average church membership who worship with some regularity in the services of worship held in the church to which they belong. It is safe to say that only about one-third of the membership of the average local church are consistent in their attendance upon the activities of worship and service in their own church.

Further Proof—Further proof is to be found in the fact that about half the members provide all the monies used in the work of maintaining the local parish. About a third give all that is provided for missions and beneficences. A careful examination of some thousands of lists of subscribers reveals that the average church membership has become partly pauperized because a small number provide more than sixty-five percent of all the monies contributed by the membership. Among those who are listed as giving fifty cents or a quarter a week for all purposes, is an appalling number of people well fed, well clothed and housed, enjoying the pleasures of life and riding around in their automobiles. Many, not children, give even less than this.

Per Capita Giving—The average local church is providing much larger sums of money than ever before. Per capita giving has gone up by leaps and bounds, but this larger production is the giving of a comparatively small segment of the whole membership. Too much emphasis must not be put upon money, but it must always be remembered that money spent reveals the *loves* of the spender's life. Too many professing Christians do not

spend enough or else spend no money for the Lord they profess to love.

A Minimum Basis—An added indication of present weakness is found in the way the local church conducts its affairs upon a minimum financial basis, with constant deficits. Then the church makes a variety of attempts to get the money needed from the world outside its membership instead of producing it from the people in its own ranks. A profit-grabbing local church is a shame and disgrace to the cause of Christianity. Rightly it should have the best line of credit in the world. In consequence of its unholy and cowardly money-raising proclivities, the average local church has lost its credit in business circles.

Theological Discussion—The militancy of action properly belonging to a church has often given place to a degeneracy of theological discussion. Wordy, windy wars concerning what some people think about Bible teachings have taken the place of a war against sin within and without, and a war against covetousness, and a war against the failure to abide with Christ, and a war against a cross-less Christianity. Talk is cheap and easy and many a local church has lost its power because ease and precedent have taken the place of love and service. Many a church talks too much and prays too little, votes to do, and then far too often fails to fulfill, until a sense of failure pervades the whole institution. The average local church needs to set itself a definite spiritual program and work it till one hundred percent of the objective has been gained. Such a church will again have the sense of victory which pervaded the apostolic church. However, in many places, it will cost a great deal to win such a victory.

The Spirit of Evangelism—Some other things need to be brought home to the average local church. For instance, the spirit of evangelism has departed in many cases. The only hope for a so-called revival with resulting professions is found in the outside help given by a professional evangelist. There is a place for such help,

but many churches are dependent upon it rather than upon the Lord of Hosts. Every local church should be continuously a positive force for personal and community evangelism.

Candidates for the Ministry—Only a very small percent of the local churches produce their own ministry; hence the majority of churches are quite dependent upon others about them for the men who fill their pulpits. There is a famous church which for the past nineteen years has not produced a single recruit for the pastorate or missionary service. In that length of time they have called five men to serve them as pastors. In the long run, such a failure produces a lost cause in that particular church.

Lay Leaders—The production of lay leaders has been lost to sight. In days of old, local churches produced lay preachers, elders, class leaders and deacons who magnified their office by the services they rendered, but the militant sense of spiritual dynamic was lost in an idea of ease and honor. Often today, office-bearing in the local church does not produce a body of trained serviceable officials who capably nurture, culture and project church members into Christian service in the local parish. Officials lack knowledge and consequently have no convictions. If they possess convictions they lack the courage of their convictions. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira is common in many a local church, but one seldom finds that particular sin dealt with, but mostly it is condoned and spread by cowardly fear of trouble. A church that steadily fails to produce a capable lay leadership is headed for a real loss of influence. Many a local church is on that sort of path today.

Sinners in High Places—We are told plainly that "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin," and the average church is full of such sinners, and many of them fill the high places in official circles. They "do not believe in missions," they "do not have to give,"

they "do not like the pastor," they do as they please regardless of the plain will of God known to them quite thoroughly. The church of their voluntary choosing is afraid to correct them and they are allowed to set such a bad example to the other members that soon practically the whole church has no worthy standard by which to live.

Causing a Sense of Failure—A "let well enough alone" ministry often completes the weakness of a church that drifts away from the Lord whom all, when joining, profess to love and serve. Ease and low standards are found on every side. Lying and covetousness are seated in high places. Padded membership rolls and non-resident members make up the majority of members in many cases. The fear of man has cast its snare in the heart of the people, and year after year the dead are quietly dropped out of the church, but are unburied, and so add to the sense of failure that retards the progress of the church and hinders the fulfillment of its divine mission.

A Gloomy Picture—A gloomy picture, some will say. Others will denounce these statements as untrue or malicious, the work of a pessimist. Yet others will decry what they call "destructive criticism of the church." But that is to be expected. It has always been true that people inside the divine institution resented any real portrayal of its weaknesses and failure, consequently those failures and weaknesses have been perpetuated.

A High Standard Needed—The world needs the church, but only a strong, clean, victorious church can meet the need of the world of today. The church must have a Christian standard of personal conduct which it will steadily uphold and build into the life of each member. Weakness will be helped, and not perpetuated through condonation. Above all else, a genuine brotherly love in Christ must become a reality and help to produce a cross-bearing church that means business for God. The church needs a common-sense application of the simple

truths of the Lord to the lives of all its membership. The local church has done much to help many people and to help the community in which it has been planted. It can do greater things when it has cleansed itself by Gospel processes.

Questions

1. Has the increase in the church membership roll been proportionate to the increase in population?
2. What evidence is there to support the statement that religion has become a secondary matter in the lives of a great many people?
3. What percent of the average church membership worship regularly?
4. What percent provide for local expenses? What percent for missions and beneficences?
5. Reconcile these low percentages with the increased per capita giving.
6. Why has a church little or no credit in business circles?
7. Give several causes of failure and lack of progress in the average church.
8. What qualities must a church possess to meet the needs of the world of today?
9. What would the answer to the above questions be "in your church"?

II

THE NEED OF SPIRITUALITY

Machinery versus Spirituality—Machinery can never take the place of spiritual life in the realm of Christianity. No amount of mechanical perfection will ever produce an effective local church unless underneath, above, and all around the institution, first consideration is given to a proper and personal relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Spirituality—The whole and all its individual parts called people must be thus properly related to God in a life of worship, service, witnessing and giving. Spirituality finds its source and continuity in a right relationship with God. Spirituality is personal at its source and in its reception and utilization. It comes from a God of love to a loving child of His. It is not primarily a thing, but a living expression of a divine person. Spirituality does not consist of saying something, but of *living Someone.*

A Normal Relationship—Spirituality is not something abnormal or unreal. It is a normal relationship between a regenerated person and the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore it must be part and parcel of all that grows out of such a relationship. It must be the governing factor in the conduct of an individual life as well as the controlling force in the conduct of the divine institution called the local church. Spirituality must be as real as the Lord Himself and as personal as the individual who knows and lives with the Lord Christ.

Mysterious—Some people speak of spirituality with bated breath as though it were mysterious and to be feared. It is true that the human mind cannot compre-

hend all its mysteries and powers, but whenever some understanding of the Omnipotent, some of the love of the Father, some of the saving grace of Jesus and the companionship of the Holy Spirit become a reality to the individual to that extent there is no mystery or unreality in spiritual life, but positive experience. The Christian must live a spiritual life because such a life will be based on a personal knowledge of God's dealings. Such a spiritual life will be one of order and constant inner growth; not of disorder and loss of power and personality.

Common Sense—Spirituality does not produce a lack of common sense, but builds uncommon good sense into all the right relationships of Christian living. This does not produce a life of ease, but one of hardship. It is the way of the cross. A cross-bearing way can never be easy, and one of the proofs of spirituality is "to endure hardness as a good soldier."

Unreal—Much of church life today is not spiritual because it is unreal, easy-going, and not according to the will of God. Many a local church is building more and more machinery instead of making a simple, purposeful attempt to bring people into a right relationship with God. In consequence it becomes more and more difficult to put the local institution back on the right track where God can use it and bless it largely. Worldly, unspiritual methods of doing spiritual tasks are a great detriment to the life of the average church.

The Average Church—The phrase *"average church"* will be encountered again and again. It is meant to signify all those local organizations which are not exceptional in their development and production and are therefore put on a par with many similar churches, or else are below the standard of the majority. A characteristic rating can, therefore, be given to all but the exceptional church by determining an average between the normal and those below the normal. The ability thus to determine an average church is a simple illustration of the truth that

the laws of spiritual dynamic are everywhere present and cannot be neglected or violated without a loss of power and growth.

A Spiritual Church—The path to spirituality is along the way of the Word of God. The Word of God leads a soul to prayer. A prayer-filled church is a spiritual church because its members are seeking and following along after a very real God in a very real way that reveals the common sense of a right relationship with God. A faith in Jesus Christ based upon the Word, and the companionship of the Holy Spirit are the causes of this spiritual reality. Unseen Persons, yes! but nevertheless known and loved. Unseen powers, yes! until the reality of the power of the unseen One is revealed in the changed life of the believer. The element of spirituality is essential, if there is to be a competent local church.

Questions

1. Define and give the elements of spirituality.
2. Why is there so little spirituality in the majority of local churches?
3. How may spirituality be developed and deepened?
4. Why is the element of spirituality essential in church life?
5. What produces spiritual reality?
6. What is meant by "an average church"?

III

UNITY ESSENTIAL

A Simple Survey—A local church recently made a simple survey of its organization and life. It revealed the fact that there were four departments doing various types of educational work. In many cases these four departments were dealing with the same groups of people and were supposed to be teaching the same subjects in whole or in part. Yet one department did not know scientifically what the others were doing, nor had they ever conferred together concerning the work they were doing. In consequence there was overlapping, contradiction and a sense of conflict. No one could claim that such a church was a unit or that it had a sense of co-ordination in its organization.

Organized Groups—Another church sent in a survey revealing the fact that it had thirty-two organized groups within its life, each of them with treasurers. All of these groups were gathering money in various ways from the church constituency without regard to what was being done in other parts of the organization. In consequence it was not unusual for an individual to be approached seven or eight times during a Sunday with an appeal for money. Outside of any group, and often inside of it, no one knew just what monies had been secured or where such funds had come from. The varied expenditures were made without any regard to what others were doing. A closer survey revealed that sickness in one of the homes had produced, within two days, flowers from seven organizations at a total cost of nearly eighteen dollars. That was a shameful waste of the Lord's money. None of

these groups accounted to the church for any of the funds they collected. When it was suggested that their money-raising activities were a serious drawback to the church itself, their attitude expressed resentment and a sense of injury. Less than forty percent of the membership of the church were subscribers of record to the current expense fund or the missionary funds of the local organization under whose auspices they gathered together from week to week.

A Law Unto Themselves—In many a local church, departments such as the Bible School, the Women's Organization, the Men's League and the Young People's Society are a law unto themselves. Without regard to what is being done elsewhere in the local church, they plan their program, raise money, expend it and then resent what they call "any interference" from the parent organization called the local church. Within the various departments, such as the Bible School, the tendency has been to multiply segmentary organizations which too often do as they please and thus defeat the purposes of the whole. The present-day development of uncontrolled organized classes contains a very serious menace to the proper development of the divine institution called the local church.

A Destructive Incident—Let me cite an incident: A men's class which had been developed by high pressure methods, demanded and secured from the Bible School the right to control its own finances. Soon it outgrew the quarters assigned to the class and, without consulting any church or Bible School authorities, made a contract with a theatre for the use of an auditorium more than a mile from the church edifice. This involved contingent expenses and in consequence caused many to fail to provide money for church purposes, which they excused on the ground that they were giving heavily to support the men's class. Also it detained many men from the morning service of the church because the class continued in ses-

sion past the hour for beginning the church service. The men were tired from their class exertions and the church was a mile away, so they did not go to church to worship. An exceptional case, some will say, but it presents the dangers that are to be found in a lack of church unity.

The Organized Whole—Men's classes and other organized groups are very helpful, and should always be encouraged, provided they retain their proper place in the organized whole as the hand is maintained in the body. But any organized group, self-sufficient and self-supported which becomes a rival to or substitute for the regular church services of worship and preaching should not be tolerated if it is desired to maintain the unity and promote the growth of the divine institution. Nothing can take the place of the regular church services of worship. The whole is always greater than its parts. Any part of the whole that menaces or cannot be unified with the whole should be eliminated or changed so as to benefit the whole and thus contribute to its total strength and upbuilding.

Unification—The whole work of every part of the church organization and its activities needs to be carefully unified at the beginning of each year. This can be done through a group of leaders representative of every phase of activity who once a year or oftener, subject to the approval of the church, make a plan and program for all concerned. Then they should make a budget covering every need of all concerned in carrying out the plans and program. This should then be submitted to all departments and finally to the church itself for final approval. This group may be called an executive committee. Such a representative executive unifying body, meeting regularly, is essential to the success of any local church that desires to maintain its oneness and yet provide a place to work and worship for all the individuals within the life of the institution.

Unity Essential—Unity is essential to the competency

and progress of any local church. Without unity of organization in its educational processes, its finances and its plans and programs, the power of the church will ultimately perish.

Questions

1. What are the disadvantages of a system which lacks co-ordination?
2. Why may it be said that uncontrolled organized classes are a menace to proper development of the church as a whole?
3. How may all church organizations be unified at the beginning of the year?
4. Why is unity essential?
5. What are the duties of an executive committee?
6. To whom should the executive committee be responsible?

IV

THE TEACHING ELEMENT

Intelligence—A competent church is in part the product of intelligence. Intelligence is developed by the processes of education.

An Ignorant Membership—An ignorant church membership will not produce a competent church, but will cause it steadily to decline in power and fruitfulness. Ignorance produces fanaticism and one-sidedness, both of which are dangerous in the realm of religion. We need, and must produce, an intelligent church leadership, both clerical and lay, and we need, and must produce, an intelligent group of lay members in the average church.

The Theological Seminary—First, attention needs to be given to the education of those who are to lead the local churches. The average graduate of a theological seminary is intelligent but woefully one-sided because intellectual processes have been built up through study of the Bible, the history of religions, some dead languages, some homiletics and Sunday School pedagogy. The graduate is quite largely a theorist concerning the practices of the local church because the only clinical work he has had, has been in connection with the art of preaching and some evangelistic methods and Bible School pedagogy. In many cases this clinical work has not had the supervision of any professor. About the science of organization and projection he is untaught. Of the science of church finance he is ignorant or often misled by the lectures of a professor who has long since left the active pastorate. In regard to women's work, which concerns about sixty-five

percent of his future church members, he is like a child untaught. Salesmanship has not been built into his preparation, even though most of his future tasks will call for the exercise of that art. As a future minister he is mostly an intellectual specialist without training or experience in the work of a minister.

This is not true of the product of every theological seminary, but it is sadly true of most of them. The progress of all seminaries towards a proper curriculum and clinical program is very slow indeed. It is often said that such a statement as is here made is not true because a very large majority of our seminaries bring in special lecturers to deal with the subjects of a clinical nature. A moment's thought, however, will result in the conclusion that some lectures about clinical matters can never take the place of actual clinical work under the direction of a regular competent professor on the faculty. Of course it is recognized that there are many difficulties in the way of meeting the need for a clinically prepared ministry, but to a divine institution, difficulties should only be a spur to achievement. A human difficulty is a divine opportunity. To say that a plan is ideal is to confess that it ought to be our objective.

Proper Training—The ministers who have not even had proper intellectual training and discipline are to be pitied indeed. Proper intellectual training will enable an average man at the end of some years of needlessly hard experience to build into his practices some proper clinical processes. Where there has been no real education covering a period of years, the leadership of an undeveloped and undisciplined mind will produce an ignorant straggling group of unbalanced people as a result of such ministry. That such is the case we are sure by an examination of hundreds and thousands of local churches covering a period of many years. A superficial observer will doubtless disagree with this conclusion, but to a real student of local church life, it is apparent that only the divine char-

acter of the local church has often kept it going in spite of all its ignorant meanderings.

Proof Demanded—The challenge will at once be given to prove such ignorance as is here alleged. Begin to answer your own question by asking if the average church has a group of trained lay leaders who have been taught and trained in and for their duties. We will never have an educated church until there is an educated lay leadership. We have not any well trained lay leadership and therefore we have an uneducated church membership. To prove this, ask yourself the following questions about your own church membership. Can the members of the average church repeat from memory the words that reveal the basis of their church relationship? In fact, in some communions, many of them cannot even do that. Can they give a definition of Christian stewardship? Do they know what there is to prayer other than asking for what they think they need? Can they give an intelligent reason why they joined the church of which they are members? Can they tell whether the missionary enterprise is a matter of voluntarism or a mandate? Can they explain why, after professing to accept Christ as Lord and Savior, they can unblushingly refuse thereafter to give the Lord of their life the money that He demands of them? Can they give the simple outlines of spiritual and church discipline? Can they relate faith and works so as to produce the basis for a saved living? Preaching without further educational processes will not produce an intelligent church.

An Emotional Experience—To fill our churches full of people who have had an emotional experience but have not been regenerated is a sad mistake because in their ignorance they accept the emotion in place of regeneration, and for a short while they spring up, but in the end they are like the seed that was planted on the stony ground. A genuine teaching ministry would soon have revealed their mistake to the persons themselves and also to their teacher, or else the teaching ministry of the church would

have confirmed the faith of the regenerated persons by growing lives of fruitfulness and work. That the local church needs to adopt a thorough educational program and process is widely recognized. It is sometimes said that it is better for a soul to have had even a short experience with Christianity than to have had none at all, but the remark is self-contradictory.

Regeneration and Education—By the same token it will at once be recognized and acknowledged that education can never take the place of regeneration. It is clearly taught in the New Testament that education is the process for developing the new-born child of God. It is oftentimes said that church members will not give the necessary time for these educational processes to be applied to their lives. Concerning this it should be stated that a real Christian will seek to do the will of the Lord and will therefore find the several hours each week for six weeks twice a year that are needed for such study as is necessary. In the average case a persistent refusal to give the needed reasonable amount of time for education would be presumptive proof that the person had not been born again. Our acceptance of Christianity often lacks reality and therefore does not rule the life.

Schools—Bible Schools, church schools, schools of mission study are to be found in the majority of local churches. Their methods are adaptable to varying peoples and conditions. Text-books upon most of the needed topics are to be had through the publication departments of the various communions and from other publishers and booksellers. The weak link in the chain is found when it is known that only about a quarter of the membership of the average local church ever enroll in the classes held in their church, and many of those who thus enroll as students take only a small part of the courses offered to them.

An Intelligent Church—We need an intelligent church in this modern world if it is to cope with the intelligence of a wicked devil. We need a competent church in this

world of competent commercial organizations, and a competent church is made up of an enlightened membership. Let us proceed to educate our membership. The educational process should begin before regeneration and then be continued until complete sanctification has been attained in heaven.

Questions

1. Why is the average graduate of a theological seminary unprepared for the practical work of the church?
2. What effect does an ignorant pastor have upon his church membership?
3. How may it be determined whether or not a church membership is properly educated?
4. Why is an emotional experience without regeneration, considered an evil?
5. How may this evil be remedied?
6. Is education or regeneration the first fundamental requisite of a Christian life?
7. How may a church membership be properly educated?

V

THE STEWARDSHIP ELEMENT

The Owner—There can be a competent local church only when the individuals composing it yield themselves and their all to a proper recognition and acknowledgment that God is the owner and they are but stewards.

Stewards of Time—To do its work adequately, the church needs some *time* from every member. We are stewards of our time. A man in good health, with a successful business on his hands, was recently elected to a church office which he was perfectly capable of filling. When notified of his election to the office, he responded with the statement, "I cannot accept it. I have not the time to do the work." He agreed, however, to survey his daily life and when it was found that he gave nine hours a week to golf and spent four hours a week in the precincts of a down-town club, he amended his first statement and accepted the office because he realized, as a Christian, he owed God a first share of his time. Every one has twenty-four hours to every day. The question is, will each be a good steward of his time and give God enough of it to make the church to which he belongs able to do its work properly.

Stewards of Talent—The church must have the use of a share of the *talents* possessed by every member if it is to be a competent institution. The average local body in the average American community contains a goodly share of the successful business and professional men of the community. The conduct of the business affairs of the church does not indicate the presence of those business men, nor does the character of the organization bespeak their enlist-

ment in its conduct. Many a successful business and professional man loses his share of the Lord's battle because he insists upon conducting the church upon a minimum basis. Over and over again, such men in church meetings say, "We can get along on that," but they know the institution cannot prosper and grow on "that." "That" is usually the lowest possible amount. In commercial life and in the practice of a profession, contraction generally means loss and danger. It means the same thing in church life.

A Christian Steward—A Christian is a steward of his talents, and the church must have the benefit of the first use of all such talents. A leading department store owner is also the chief lay officer in his local church. Times have been hard in his section, but he admitted that he was maintaining his business on a good basis by increased advertising and the employment of an extra good sales force. But in his church they have employed a lower-priced pastor and trimmed the budget down to its lowest possible scale. He was the chief factor in that disastrous operation. He had failed in a marked way to be a good steward of his talents. Such failures explain in a large degree the incompetency of many a church.

Personality—Personality is a very valuable asset in life. The preacher wins by the proper use of it. The salesman radiates it to the benefit of his orders. An actor or actress is made by a good personality. The professional man wins business and keeps it on the basis of its wise development and use. The average church membership contains personality in good quantity and quality, and does not use it; hence cripples itself. A Christian is a steward of his personality, and what he has of it must first be given to the uses of his Lord.

The Stewardship of Life—A very successful salesman was in the membership of a prominent church. He had formed the habit of coming home on Saturday with "that tired feeling," so he slept late on Sunday morning, read

the Sunday paper and seldom went to church. A little book on "The Stewardship of Life" fell into his hands just when a new pastor came to his church. The result was that he realized he was a steward and then dedicated the first of his personality to the uses of his Lord and Savior, and thus put the image and superscription of Jesus upon all his personality. Today that church is known far and wide as one where you will get a genuine welcome. The salesman is the leader of the welcoming host.

No church can be truly competent unless the membership are good stewards of their personality. If a member has no personality that is worth while now, it can be developed, for inherently every one has it latent in his life. The competent church will develop a stewardship of personality throughout its membership.

Possessions and Money—Possessions or money are either valuable assets in life or else they are very dangerous liabilities. Stewardship or the lack of it is the factor that determines whether possessions and money are assets or liabilities. The competent church will develop in the life of each member a real stewardship of all that is called property and money. God will then get the first part of all that is in the possession of a child of His. Failure to be a good steward of money is a very common sin, and the cause of tremendous loss of power in many a church. The apostle Paul put the marker upon the giving standard of his heavenly Father and incited all who follow after Him to give in like measure, when he wrote: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable Gift." God's giving was beyond words because it was a love gift, a giving of separation, a giving of first fruitage. The competent church must needs develop such a type of giving as that. The fact is that half the membership of the average church never give to God and His cause so much as a bean. They rob God of tithes and offerings. A sense of possession without a realization of stewardship produces idolatry or covetousness.

Ananias—Some time ago, in a church meeting, a prosperous-looking man sat on the front seat and started in to yell "Amen." It did not sound genuine, so the second time it occurred the speaker stopped, and said, "I hope you give as well as you yell." The man did not utter another word during the service. Afterward the treasurer said that the man was worth a quarter of a million dollars but had never been known to give a cent to any cause within or without the life of the church. Such a thief and robber helps to destroy the competency of any church and, like Ananias of old, should be subject to spiritual discipline as an unfaithful steward. His example is fatal to the others in the membership of the church.

Untrained Officers—Church officials are incompetent because they are untrained for their tasks. The treasurer of the average church supposes he was elected primarily to handle money. That is about five percent of his real task. His major task is to be his Lord's lay leader to handle, develop and train the church members to become real stewards of all that they possess. There is a grim, subtle sense of failure and weakness in many a church because this has not been done, and the church members are allowed to lie to God and their fellow members by promising to give and then not doing it. On the other hand, there is an abounding sense of joy and victory in many a church today where practically every member has been made to come to a sense of stewardship in regard to their possessions. A giving church membership is a living church membership. A non-giving church member is a whited sepulchre unless he is receiving aid from the church. Even in such a case a church with a proper sense of stewardship will give such a needy one a little more than is needed so that he will have something to give to his Lord's cause.

A Light Set Upon a Hill—The steward who is true to his stewardship of possessions is like a light set upon a hill. Others see his stewardship and are led to follow his

example. The competent church does not hide the records of stewardship, but publishes them so that Ananias, Sapphira, the rich young ruler, the man Nicodemus and the splendid widow all stand forth in their true light before the whole church. To say that a thing "never has been done in my church" is not to say that it ought not and could not be done to good advantage.

The competent church is a group of God's stewards who have learned the lessons of their Lord. "Such as I have, give I unto Thee," will then be the faithful testimony of each life.

Questions

1. Give a general definition of stewardship.
2. How may a church utilize the talents of its members?
3. Of what practical use is individual personality in church life?
4. What percent of the members of the average local church contribute nothing to its support?
5. What other duties has the treasurer besides the handling of money?
6. How may the poor of the church be enabled to practice stewardship?
7. Why should the record of each member's stewardship of possessions be published?

VI

AN EXPECTATION NECESSARY

A Negative Expectation—Church life today is not based upon a positive expectation, but upon a negative expectation. When facts are faced, it does not really mean today that a confession of sin and a profession of faith in Jesus Christ produces an individual who seeks church membership in order to do his part to realize the expectations of that divine institution. Honestly, the average church does not really have any expectation that every member will produce the results of a life of faith and works. Its practices belie its words. Although practically every communion has a printed standard formally adopted by the authorities of the church, in reality it is not circulated with the expectation that it will be followed by the rank and file of the members.

For instance, one communion or denomination uses a covenant that has been voluntarily adopted by the great majority of the local churches. In that covenant is a simple statement "that as soon as possible after we remove from this place we will unite with some other church of like faith and order." Yet at last accounts, an average of more than twenty-five percent of all the enrolled members in many thousands of churches were reported as non-resident. In many of those churches they go through the farce of reading this covenant month after month, but twenty-five percent or more of their members are always in non-residence, and do not even correspond with the church nor make any contribution to its upkeep. That is living a lie. A church that lives a lie will never be really competent.

Undermining All Standards—Another communion has had a widely known prohibition against theatre-going and dancing, but it is a well known fact throughout the denomination that there was no expectation that the rule would be generally observed. The consequence is that a psychological process of undermining all standards is going on. Other more vital spiritual needs meet with the same lack of expectation.

The Giving of Money—Almost all communions have, in one form or another, a very definite expectation expressed in their articles of discipline, in their confession of faith, and in their covenant or their rules of order, that the giving of money "as God has prospered you," for the upkeep of the local church and its world outreach is expected from every member. But it is equally well known that the church, *by its practices*, tells the membership that this written expectation has no real expectation behind it. It is still true that half the members in most local churches make no contribution of record for the support of the local work or its missionary enterprises. So in reality, the membership promise with their lips to do one thing, and with their life deny that promise. What a farce such a lack of any standard and expectation makes of church living! In many cases ministers and church officers will arise to excuse this lying failure to do a simple, honest act of Christian giving. Just what effect this lack of expectation has upon the inner spiritual life of the church, it is hard to state. It must be subtly destructive to its most vital forces. It is like a diseased tonsil or an ulcer at the root of a tooth pouring through the whole body a poison that sooner or later causes sickness or death.

Excuses—Excuses are many in the mouths of all concerned, but perhaps the most prevalent statement made is, "Well, you cannot make people do things, so what are you going to do about it?" What is meant by that word "make"? Is physical force or love in the mind of such a

questioner? Physical force is quite unnecessary. Love is quite necessary and successful.

Illustrations—On a train some time ago, a traveller was having a very peaceful journey until the train stopped at a station and took on a woman and her two children. Then peace departed and hell was let loose. Those two children did every imaginable mischief possible and then some things that pass imagination. The mother feigned sleep, then stormed and cried and threatened. The seven-year-old boy hit her a solid blow in the face and taunted her with the fact that she was afraid of him and that he did not have to mind her. Finally, after the train had been suddenly stopped by a piece of dangerous mischief, the traveller reached his destination and left the car at the station with the husky brakeman literally sitting on the two youngsters in a rear seat while the weeping mother, in the middle of the car, repeated, "I can't help it—they don't mean to be bad." Those boys had been raised without any expectation of obedience. A week later, the same traveller was entertained for a day in a home where there lived a father and mother and five husky lads between the ages of seven and seventeen. That was a wonderful home. All the abounding energies of boy life were apparent, but the orderliness and genuine obedience of those five lads was so marked that the visitor spoke of it at the dinner table. With a smile and a glance of approval at her boys, the mother said: "Well, it is simple; we love them and have brought them up with the expectation that they will obey their parents."

Simple but wonderful, and wonderfully simple, for that expectation had been lovingly built into the lives of those children so that they knew their parents meant what they said and so must be obeyed. Because expectation and love were there, results were obtained worthy of a real home. Which of the two pictures more nearly represents the life of the family of God's people in the average household of faith? Oh, the pity of it all that we must

have a church that must weep in disgrace when there might be one that smiled because love had paid the price and Christian expectations were being realized.

A Large Force of Officers—The competent church is one that has expectations and lovingly helps every member to fulfill them. To do this, the local church must have a large force of trained lay officers. Each of them will be assigned a few members to develop and train. The competent church will have a sufficient number of such lay officers so that a reasonable task will be assigned them which they can fulfill with joy by the expenditure of a steward's amount of time, energy, and talent upon their particular task.

Questions

1. Does a church, in reality, expect its members to live up to the letter of their professions?
2. Name an instance of a universally violated church prohibition?
3. What evil results does this denial of obligation produce?
4. Love or Physical force? Which shall be used? Why?
5. What part does the trained lay officer play?
6. How many trained lay leaders shall there be?

VII

THE NEED OF LAY LEADERSHIP

Lay Leadership—A competent church has not only good pastoral leadership, but also a properly developed, well trained, lay leadership. A regiment of soldiers that had only a colonel and some hundreds of men would partake more of the character of a mob than it would the character of a well-disciplined body of trained men. It is developed into a disciplined body because the colonel has two lieutenant-colonels and several majors. They have a captain and several lieutenants for every company and then under them there are sergeants and corporals for the squads and files. All of these officers know the regulations and the manual of drill. So the whole group are under the constant supervision of fully trained officers and the mob aspects disappear, giving place to a sense of discipline and responsibility individually located. The average church is incompetent in the face of its task because there is only a pastor, some untrained lay officials, and the mass of members. There is no developed sense of accountability.

Trained Lay Leaders—The local church has never, within the century, attempted to produce a group of trained lay officials who knew exactly what their office comprehended in the way of duties and who were technically proficient in those duties. The consequence has been that quite often they have interfered with a competent minister by deleting his office of its possibilities while they simply held their offices but did not fulfill its duties. The pastor is the leader of the whole church, and it is his duty to fulfill that responsibility.

Technique—Part of his duties should be to help select lay officials and then train them in the technique of their duties. Lay officials in the average local church should be classed in one of the following four groups: (1) spiritual officers, such as elders, stewards, deacons and deaconesses, (2) executives, such as the Bible School superintendent, the president of the Women's Union, the president of the Men's Organization, and the president of the Young People's Society, the clerk, the lay chairman of the Board or executive committee, and the music director or head of the music committee, (3) the financial leaders, such as the treasurers, financial secretaries, trustees and any others charged with the administration of the giving life of the membership, (4) educational leaders, or those charged with duties along technical educational lines. There should be a clear line of procedure in the assignment of duties to the various groups of officers and then to the individual officers within the groups.

Pastor to Train Officials—It will at once be recognized that unless the pastor is personally and technically capable of training the officials the competency of the church is endangered. Many a pastor fails at this point, for nothing else can be substituted for capable lay leadership, and a church will only stumble along without it. Not even great preaching will take the place of trained lay leaders, and many a church has seen its crowds disappear with the going of a preacher, because the members had united with the preacher and had never been integrated into the life of the church. Without lay leadership to care for the results, crowds and numerous additions only add to the losses finally sustained. Sad to say, there are many ministers who are afraid to develop lay leaders for fear their own sphere will be menaced and their power lessened. Sometimes this is due to an experience with a lay "boss" who has sought to dominate the ministerial office, but no matter what may be the occasion, a minister is unwise and short-sighted who fails to develop lay leadership.

Complimenting the Minister—No minister can do the entire work of a church, and even if it were possible, such a course will never be wise, nor will it produce a competent, well-rounded church body. The minister is to help train the people to do the work of the church. The highest compliment any church can pay a minister is to be so well trained that it will function for a time as well without the pastor as when he is present.

Deacons and Deaconesses—The duties of the lay spiritual officers such as deacons and deaconesses or stewards are threefold:

(1) The care of the membership so as to produce a worshipping, serving, witnessing, and giving people;

(2) The door into the church should be in their care so as to see that every incoming member knows, before admission to the membership of the church, the duties and obligations involved in such membership. The time to determine many things and to start some habits is before the vote has been taken which makes the newcomer a full member. After membership has been achieved, there must be further instruction and enlistment.

(3) The door out of the church should be in charge of this group. This involves the dismission of members to another church by an honest, truthful letter of dismission. The exercise of spiritual church discipline should also be committed to them. This last mentioned act of discipline, though clearly taught in the New Testament, is a lost art in the average church. In consequence the church has suffered seriously.

The Financial Officers—The duties of the financial officers are to prepare a budget covering all the expenditures of the church for work at home and abroad, then to set up the mechanical and educational processes of an Every-Member Plan and finally, after the deacons and deaconesses have produced a pledge from every member, plan for a wise follow-up to produce the needed payments week by

week. They also are charged with the processes of handling the money that is being produced.

Executive Heads of Departments—The duties of the executive heads of departments are chiefly to care for the work of the department with which they are concerned, such as a Women's Organization, a Bible School or a Young People's Society. In these realms there has been developed a body of denominational specialists who can be called to aid the pastor in the training of these officials.

Educational Officers—The duties of the educational group of officers, such as the heads of departments in the Bible School, the teachers in the school of missions, or the church school, and the head of the educational work in the various departments of the Young People's Society are to help, plan, project, and maintain a good pedagogic program to meet the needs of the constituency. Back of and with all these groups of officers should be the pastor. He is the colonel of the regiment. His authority is the love and respect of the people he is leading into higher and larger spheres of activity.

Church Officers' Clinic—After every annual election, there should be a church officers' clinic, which should be conducted by the pastor. Every officer should be expected to faithfully attend this clinic. Then there should be a "setting apart" service on a Sunday morning, but the foolish and meaningless procedure today of laying on of hands should be rigorously omitted. Recently a number of church officers' clinics have been held in various cities on a Sunday. The interest of the pastors was first enlisted so that they clearly realized the advantages of the plan to train their officials. Therefore they were willing to cripple their own work for one Sunday in order to secure future permanent benefits. They, therefore, saw to it that the majority of their officials reported at a centrally located place at 9:30 on a Sunday morning.

A church specialist then gave them clinical instruction

and conducted conferences with the various types of officers. The continuous instruction and discussion of such a clinic always produces marked improvements in the life of the churches represented in such a gathering.

Command Respect—Lay officers carefully chosen and then well trained, will command the respect and the following of the church membership. Without such a group, the church can never be fully competent in the face of its important tasks. With a group of well chosen, fully trained officers, the church will produce results that will bring to it a sense of achievement and a spirit of victory. Such a church will be really competent for its great task.

Questions

1. Liken a church to an army.
2. What are the consequences of an untrained lay leadership?
3. How may the pastor produce a trained lay leadership?
4. Classify lay officials in the average church.
5. Why is it that some pastors are afraid to develop trained laymen?
6. What are the duties of a trained spiritual lay officer?
7. Give the duties of the financial officers.
8. What relation does the pastor bear to his officers?

VIII

THE SACRIFICIAL ELEMENT

Progress and Dynamic—The element of sacrifice, when developed in the life of a church, denotes spiritual progress and dynamic, and gives impetus to the competency of the divine institution. The sacrificial spirit is a costly thing to develop. It costs love and prayer to initiate. It costs more love and prayer and much work to maintain. It means that eyes are uplifted to the cross of Christ and some are carrying their cross obediently and are seeking to serve and to give rather than get.

A Working Church—There will never be a good working church until the spirit of sacrifice possesses the hearts and minds of the church membership. For instance, it is quite loudly proclaimed that great strides have been made in producing a missionary church membership. Such a statement can hardly be supported by a fair analysis of the conditions in the average local church.

A Missionary Church—Three lines of proof are offered to support the widespread statement that we now have a missionary church and a membership that is missionary in spirit and deed.

First, the large increase in the number of church members who contribute to the missionary cause, with the consequent increase in the amount of money contributed.

Second, the tremendous increase in the demand for Christian world service materials, such as study books, pageants and plays on missionary subjects and the general denominational literature which tells the story of its missionary achievements.

Third, the ease with which recruits for Christian world

service are now obtained from the church memberships of the land.

Missionary Advance—Although these three lines of proof may be superficially interpreted as indicating that tremendous progress has been made in missionary advance among the rank and file of local church members, a more careful analysis in the light of other facts may tend to disprove the attainment of the much-desired real advance in missionary service among the great mass of church members. The importance of this whole matter rests upon the relation between the element of sacrifice and the missionary cause. Basically the two are one. Both are essential to Christian living. So-called missionary work is one of the great evidences of a spirit of sacrifice.

A Contradiction—But the giving of money to missions without first having given of one's self to mission work is an entire contradiction of logic, reason, and Scriptural practice and puts the giver in a dangerous situation where contradiction is apparent to any but a superficial observer and thinker.

Work Done by Proxy—About half the membership of the average local church contribute some money to the missionary cause. Less than five percent of the membership have any participation through personal service in meeting the growing missionary needs that are all about the average local parish. Scores and hundreds of pastors have been faced again and again with smug or curt refusals on the part of their capable members who were asked to undertake a piece of missionary work in connection with foreign-speaking or other groups needing personal ministry. When church members who could serve will decline to serve, "because I do not like such people," but will give money to employ others to do what they selfishly decline to do, such giving is basically a proof of selfishness and not an evidence of sacrifice. Many a local church pursues the even tenor of its way regardless

of the growing group of people round about who need missionary help. When the incoming tide of foreign-speaking or racial groups has reached a certain height, the local church " folds up its tent and, like the Arab, silently steals away " from its real opportunity. Oh, yes, the organized missionary forces of that same communion will take over that deserted field and, with the money of those same church members, will put employed missionaries into that needy field. Thus the work is done by proxy. A substitute is provided by the use of money. In thus substituting money for self service, the unreality of the missionary belief is revealed and proven.

No Substitute—There can be no substitute for personal missionary service in the life of a believer who is able to serve. The world may be won to Christ by the use of money and other people, but in many cases it is to be feared that the people who selfishly avail themselves of their money and some other person's missionary service, will be found to be castaways themselves. The reality of Christianity is to be revealed in its sacrificial elements. Not less money, but far more agonizing prayer and personal service, as well as money, must be forthcoming from the average church membership.

Missionary Materials—The second proof offered as an indication of tremendous advance in producing a missionary church is the enlarged use of missionary materials. Is it a good sign when it is followed by continued lack of service and increased contribution? It leads to the conclusion that its end was money propaganda rather than life and education. When education and money production are combined by one organization in one operation, the tendency is always to lose the real educational values in the desire for the production of immediate money. Ultimate values and production are finally destroyed because of the lack of a proper education. The missionary *reality* is not largely produced by the use of such materials, because it is a process of building upon the sands of

selfishness and unreality, rather than upon a foundation of sacrificial missionary living. Too often no foundation in facts or experience has been laid.

Lack of Realism—The utter lack of realism produced in regard to the missionary opportunities all about the average local church member must be sternly faced and lovingly considered. Not theories but facts constitute the start towards regeneration. Salvation is a life, not an act of the lips or a formal union with a church or just the production of money. Heaven is not to be gained hereafter by much reading about the sacrifice and missionary service of others, but heaven will be gained hereafter because through faith and works the spiritually born individual lived, worked, gave, and sacrificed with Christ today and tomorrow. Propaganda is often dangerous because it aims to produce effects without proper relation to causation. A theoretical knowledge about far away missions without the practice of home missions is a sin, for "to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Sin is not an evidence of sacrifice but of selfishness.

Missionary Recruits—The third line of proof offered to support the hope that large advance in producing a missionary church has been made, is the increasing number of young men and women who offer themselves for Christian world service. It must, however, be remembered that they are from the young lives in the possession of the church and the proportion of members of their age constitutes but a small part of the enrolled members. Moreover, they are among the most intelligent and best educated of the young people. It is a most hopeful sign and an indication of a better future, but it is not ground for the statement that the whole or a majority of the church is truly missionary today and therefore the spirit of sacrifice animates it in its missionary outlook and objective. The world service candidates are but a small percent of the total membership and, in proportion to the growth in numbers of church

members, do not represent an unusually rapid growth in candidates.

Self-Giving and Self-Going—No church can be truly competent that is not missionary, and the missionary spirit is the result of a real acceptance of Christ's world program of self-giving and self-going. Such self-giving and self-going are true sacrifice, and will inevitably produce a competent church when persistently and lovingly practiced. Self-giving must include the giving of money whenever it is in the posssesion of the believer. The giving of money cannot, in many cases, become a substitute for self-going. Self-going can be accomplished through prayer and the giving of money *in some cases.* In the light of the missionary needs and opportunities, however, that are in the front and back doors of most of our local churches, nothing but individual and personal self-going on the part of very many people will prove conclusively that the church is really missionary and therefore loves sacrifice.

Questions

1. What does sacrifice in the life of the church denote?
2. What are the three proofs offered in substantiation of the statement that we now have a missionary church membership?
3. Why are these reasons inadequate and unsound?
4. What produces a missionary spirit?
5. What proof can a church offer that it is really a missionary church?

IX

THE LOVE THAT WINS

Church Fellowship—The local church fellowship was designed to be built upon love. Our love for the Lord Jesus Christ was to be a binder which held us in a Christ-like love for all our fellow Christians, and in particular those of our own household of faith. "By this ye may know that ye have passed from death unto life because ye love the brethren."

A Principle—Love is primarily a principle, not an emotion, though it may ofttimes find some emotional expression. Primarily, love is not interested in things but in persons. It may sometimes find expression by the use of things. Love and like are very different. A person can love another and yet not like the object of his love. Like and dislike are transitory feelings, but love is an undying divine principle. A true missionary loves the people he is called to serve, but quite often it is impossible to like them. Many church members do not like the pastor, but if they really love God they love the minister of Jesus Christ and do their best to support his ministry of the Word. There cannot be developed a really competent church unless love rules and likes and dislikes are overruled by Christ-like love.

A Fair Question—Do the church members love one another in a practical way? is a fair question to ask. It is fair to answer it frankly. Apparently, love is quite often only a theory and not a practice in the average church. This accounts for much of the loss and failure in many a church. For instance, a man who lived in the same block whereon the church edifice stood, entered the building and

was convicted of sin and later offered himself to the church for membership. He was received and attended some services for a few weeks thereafter. Then for ten or more years he did not put a foot inside the door of the church nor did a single lay person seek him out or show any brotherly love for him and his soul. In the wildest moments of rabid defense of the prevailing church life, could it be said that the church members in that case loved one another? The answer, of course, will be that the case described was an exceptional one. There is seldom a church that does not have scores of such cases represented by names on the church roll. In the average case the really hard task is to get the church to express a vital interest and love in such people.

Like and Dislike—There are countless reasons offered why nothing has been done to help the non-participating member. Many of them center about like and dislike. Years ago a certain family had three children. Two of the children were perfect specimens of well-formed, healthy childhood, but the third one was a pathetic and hopelessly deformed child, needing constant ministry. It was wonderful to watch the mother of that family. She loved all the children, but she loved that little cripple with a most wonderful, tender love. A magnificent love it was because it was so costly. Doubtless she liked the well-formed children best, but her life was based upon the love and not upon the like. It is admitted, without argument, that many of the church members who present the greatest problems of the church are unlikable, but they must be loved and reached if the local church is to become a competent force for the Lord and Savior.

Lost to Sight—For many decades it has been the unspeakably un-Christian practice to allow large numbers of people to join the local churches from time to time and then, in the course of a few years, quietly drop their names from the roll of members because they have been lost to sight. For years, about *half as many people have been in*

one way or another excluded and erased as were added by profession. The exclusion and erasure was a cowardly and un-Christian act at the end of an unloving relation. Many of the people thus dropped or excluded could have been easily helped and really redeemed if only some, in addition to the minister, had felt a sense of obligation and love for them. One of the great objectives of the church is lost when this obligation to love is lost sight of by the members.

Pledge Not Paid—Can the church members say that they love the brethren when it is a common practice for the officers to accept a written pledge from a fellow member that involves the payment of money which the pledgor could easily pay, but never does pay because it is well known that there is neither love nor courage enough among the officers to cause them to faithfully deal with such a man and secure the payment of his pledge? The officials virtually allow the pledgor to commit spiritual suicide on an installment plan. Many a time the officers, when facing such a situation, say: "Oh, well, let him alone. If you say anything to him he will get mad and cause trouble." The trouble is already there in the heart and life of the false steward. It is just as surely there in the heart and life of the unloving, false officials.

The Real Trouble—Which is the worst sort of trouble, a toothache which makes the patient groan or even yell, or a deep-seated silent cancer that eats away the life in a stealthy way until towards the end of its death-dealing progress? The church needs love, brotherly, Christ-like love, for the whole fellowship of the household of faith, whether likeable or unlikeable, rich or poor, young or old, ignorant or learned, interesting or uninteresting.

A Home of Love—Some time ago a visitor was entertained in a home where there was present the father, mother, and eight children. It was a real home of love. In the morning, when the visitor came downstairs, he found the family gathered in the breakfast room. After

the morning greetings had been exchanged, he was assigned a seat and all sat down at the table. It then developed that there was a vacant chair. It took the father a moment or two to decide who was absent. Then, speaking to one of the older boys, he quietly said, "John, will you please go and find Dick?" and the lad went on his mission. Did they eat? They did not. They had only a little desultory conversation while John sought Dick. About five minutes later John came back, and, excusing himself, whispered something to his father. Then the father excused himself and went out. Did they eat? They did not. They did not even have the desultory conversation. Soon father, John and Dick came in and, when all were seated, the family repeated a verse of Scripture in concert, the Lord's Prayer followed, and the visitor was asked to say grace. Then they ate. What a family! A real family it was, where love ruled and found expression in the care vouchsafed one another. Love will always find expression. Is this a picture of the average local church which is supposed to be a household of faith, a family of God's people with church officers to help the young, the weak, and those easily led astray? Too often it is absolutely no one's business to miss the absent member; therefore no one follows him up.

Care for One Another—In the average local church, there is no dynamic brotherly love which finds Christ-like expression in the care given one another. This is a serious thing to say if it is not true. But, sorrowfully, it must be said because it is true.

A Simple Group-Plan—Unreality, formality, selfishness, self-interest, self-seeking a personal salvation seems to prevail in far too many cases in local church life. These sins must be rooted out and love must take their place. The local church needs trained lay officers to care for the members under the leadership of the pastor. Then with a simple group plan in operation, those church officers can exercise a loving care over their part of the

church family and can develop a Christ-like love that will solve many of the problems and help to produce a competent church. The members who have a mind to participate in the life of the church must be used to help the others who have a name to live on the church roll, but "are not" because love has lost sight of them and love has been lost from their spiritual sight.

Questions

1. Give the difference between like and love, as they relate to spiritual things.
2. Relate love to a missionary's task—to a member's attitude toward his pastor.
3. Can love be reconciled with neglect?
4. Is exclusion and erasure in the average case justifiable?
5. How can love counteract the evil of the unpaid pledge?
6. How can loving care of members be best exercised?

X

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS

Based Upon Fact—The word scientific is not generally understood and therefore often leads to misunderstanding and controversy when used in connection with the subject matter of Christianity. That is scientific which is based upon fact. Christianity is scientific because the Lord Jesus Christ is a fact as a divine person. He is not a myth or an emotion. Much of the weakness in the life of the local church can be traced back to the failure of its leadership to establish the Lord Jesus Christ as a fact, and a supreme reality in the life of its individual members and in the life of the institution.

A Lord and Master—People profess to follow a Lord and Master because He is their Savior. Then, having joined the church, too often there is not even a faint trace of the Lordship of Jesus in their living. They do as they please regardless of the will of their Lord and Master, even when they know clearly what is His will. Thereby they tend to make a farce of the fact of a Lord in their life. To be a child of God, the Lord Jesus Christ must be a fact in the life of a real believer. The average church is unscientific, not alone in regard to belief, but also in connection with many of the processes of its life and activity.

Three Groups of Members—A large church membership was recently examined. The officials presented a table of members divided into three groups—resident, non-resident, and inactive. Subsequent examination revealed that seventeen percent of the total were classed as inactive. It was soon disclosed that this seventeen percent were to all intents and purposes dead and the leaders,

being either prideful of numbers or too cowardly to bury their dead, still counted them as part and parcel of a living household of faith. Twenty-six percent of the total membership were classed as non-resident, which simply meant that the group had been allowed to drift beyond the reach of the edifice and were living in places where there was or was not another church of like faith. In any case the church as a vital factor, as a place of responsibility and accountability, had passed from the life of all but three percent of the total in that non-resident class. That three percent corresponded with and contributed to their church.

Resident Members—Fifty-seven percent of the membership remained in the third group of so-called resident members. Eleven percent of them had not been inside the doors of the edifice for two or more years. Another seventeen percent frankly admitted that their attendance was very occasional. Of the total membership, twenty-one percent gave some sort of service to their church, and thirty-two percent more or less regularly contributed monies of record for the support of the church and its missionary obligations.

In spite of these facts, which were easily obtained, that church had gone on its unscientific way proclaiming "all is well." Many another church would tell the same sort of a story after honest self-examination.

A Scientific Piece of Work—The ministry of the average church has not been trained to do a piece of scientific work. The average theological seminary has no worth-while clinic, and its graduates do not know how to analyze the life of a church so as to produce the facts essential to a competent piece of upbuilding and development. In this respect it must be remembered that the ministry is not altogether to be blamed, for such educational institutions are controlled very largely by lay boards of trustees who are very willing to "let well enough alone." For the unscientific work of the average church the ministry must and will bear its share of

the responsibility. Others, however, must share the blame with them.

Blame the Laymen—Laymen must share the blame for the unscientific work of the average church. A group of church officials belonging to a very prominent city church were gathered to meet a visiting worker who deals with the matter of church efficiency and organization. The chairman of the church group was a celebrated manufacturer. As he greeted the visitor he said: "We are very glad to have you with us tonight, although, of course, you understand that we are a very efficient church and do not really need your help." Turning to the pastor, the visitor remarked: "Please do not open your mouth until I say you may." The pastor at once agreed, for he knew what was to happen. Turning, then, to the twenty or more men seated about the table, the visitor asked them a dozen simple questions concerning the church, its membership, and its work, such as, "How many men are enrolled? How many women? How many contributors of record have you? What is the average attendance of members at the morning worship service? How many people took a study course last year in your school of missions? Whose duty is it to enlist new members in the specific obligations of church membership?" The answers were pitifully wrong and inadequate.

Facing the manufacturer, the visitor asked, "How much half-inch bar steel have you in your warehouse?" and instantly a correct answer was forthcoming. The manufacturer and church worker had spent some hours together that afternoon and the stock report was laid on the desk of the commercial man while the churchman was present. That layman in his commercial life had the facts at hand and was doing a piece of scientific production, but as a church official, he was operating on a zero basis and did not know even the basic facts necessary to produce a working church. The overburdened pastor could not add this task to his other work, and the church would not

provide the money for the employment of more competent workers.

Non-Attendance—Non-attendance cannot be cured if it is not known that it exists. The pastor is not sent by the God who called him into service to do the work of the church or to fill the pews of the edifice. He is to train and project lay leaders who must do the work of the church and see to it that the membership are reached continuously and developed steadily.

Cure the Ills—Such facts as who does not attend, who does not serve, who does not give, are very easy to obtain, and when once in hand can be followed up by individual processes that will very largely cure the ills and create strength where before only weakness and failure existed.

Hiding the Facts—The average church has been facing its task from the standpoint of the mass. Mass effects tend to hide facts. A hundred members *en masse* are hard to reach and train. One by one, a hundred people can be reached and trained through proper leadership in the pastorate and with the co-operation of the officials of the church. "A good congregation" can hide a non-worshipping church membership.

Get the Facts—The local church must study its life and must get the facts about the people who compose its membership, its constituency, and the surrounding community. The church must get to know what the members can do, by reason of education or experience in past days. When once the facts are in hand, they should be carefully and prayerfully studied. Then plans, programs and minimum standards should be made and the people developed and projected into all that is demanded by the situation. Common sense must obtain in all that is to be attempted.

Facts Properly Used—The facts are necessary and vital to the well-being of the divine institution. Without the facts, a large measure of failure will result, but facts properly used will help greatly to achieve a real measure of spiritual success.

God is a fact. He is a God who deals with facts, and if He is a fact to us, we must do scientific work with and for Him.

Questions

1. Why may Christianity be said to be scientific?
2. To what can most of the weakness in the local church life be traced?
3. Is the ministry altogether to blame for the unscientific work of the average church?
4. Name some of the necessary facts which must be obtained previous to a follow-up campaign.
5. Should church members be trained *en masse* or individually? Give a reason for your answer.

XI

THE NEED OF ORGANIZATION

A Science of Organization—Organization is a science, which means it is based upon facts that are known and realized, such as, for instance, a definite objective, the force that can be used, and the methods and machinery to be used by the force to obtain the desired objective, with as little friction as possible.

Simplicity—The essential principle in organization is simplicity. Many a local church is doomed to incompetency because it has drifted into a confused mass of so-called organizations which have either destroyed a real unity of organization or else has produced intricacies by over-organization. This last is as hopeless as no organization. Undeveloped organization means confusion just as surely as does over-organization.

Central Control—The principle of simplicity will lead to the practice of central or unified control. Unified control demands accountability and delegated responsibility, which is possible only under proper leadership. This leadership must know all about the objectives of the organization, the force at its disposal, and be intimately acquainted with all the methods and machinery to be developed and used. This does not imply that in a church there must be a "boss" who drives the organization under a whip. It does mean the possession, by the leader, of such qualities of leadership as will inspire enlistment, co-operation and development from every other person related to the organization. These qualities of leadership are both spiritual and personal. They comprehend love, knowledge, courage, tact and

industry. With such a leader, the church will be organized from a centralized point down through all its varied activities.

Strict Accountability—But there must be strict accountability from all who are charged with responsibility. The average church does not possess this sense of accountability. An executive group seems essential in a competent church. This executive group should be thoroughly representative of all the departments, but it ought not to number more than a dozen or so. Such a group should be accountable to the church itself and receive its mandates from that body. The pastor may well be the head of such an executive body. That does not mean that he should do all the work. Rather he should be developing others to lead in every possible way. The unity of the whole organization must be maintained through this executive committee. All the educational, financial, social and enlistment plans should be made by the executive committee, and after submission to the church should then be given to the various departments for execution and participation.

Confusion and Failure—Centralized control is essential to any well organized church. Lack of it produces confusion and failure. A local church recently found that two departments had advertised functions for the same evening, which involved the use of the same part of the building. Another church within the same month found its members making a duplicate educational approach from different departments. Still another church found that an evangelistic campaign, quietly planned for with dates selected and a leader engaged, was confronted on those same dates with important social projections of another department which also involved contracts. Many a church is injured because its finances are handled by many groups, none of which are controlled by the church itself, but from which the church suffers a competition that is painful and destructive.

Definite Plans and Programs—A wisely managed organization always has very definite plans and programs. In other words, it has a goal and a well-defined path to the achievement of that goal. Many a church enters a financial campaign without a budget, going out to get "what can be easily raised." The result is a year of difficulty ending with a damaging deficit. A competent church will have an enlistment goal, an educational goal, a social goal, a financial goal, a community goal, and a missionary goal. All of the forces of all the parts of the organization will combine to constantly produce the desired results.

Eliminate Friction—A good organization eliminates as much friction as possible by simple co-ordination and personal accountability. Overlapping is a constant source of friction in many a church. One department believes it has the right to function along a certain line, only to find that because of a failure to co-ordinate, some other department or group has invaded that line.

No Accountability—The average church is notorious for electing officers or constituting groups for certain purposes and then, when occasion arises, instead of using the officials or group designated for that purpose, a new committee is set up. Too often the matter ends there because the principle of accountability has been violated. While the minister is the God-called leader of the church he should be accountable to the church and should constantly report to that body. He is not accountable to the elders, deacons or trustees, nor are they his bosses, but he should co-operate with them in every possible way.

Too Much Machinery—A real organization utilizes all its forces or else eliminates those that cannot be used. A local church should either utilize every member or else make use of the members to minister to the so-called useless ones. Even the bed-ridden can be assigned a task that is worth while. Too much machinery is harmful as it

leads to waste motions and confused forces. Better far to create a spiritual dynamic and a very simple organization than to multiply the mechanism of organization so that spiritual dynamic is reduced. One of the best churches, when the utilization of its forces is considered in the light of its constant measure of production, has a representative executive group subject to the mandates of the church, which lays out all the plans and programs of the whole church. Such plans and programs are then assigned to departments accountable to the executive group, which includes all departmental heads. In turn, the departments are similarly constituted, with the result that the combined objectives of all the forces are duly achieved under a leadership of the wide-awake, competent pastor.

A Simple Form of Organization—No church can be competent without organization, but a competent church will have a simple form of organization designed to eliminate friction, centralize the plans and programs, provide for accountability, and finally to enlist and utilize every individual in the worship, service, giving and teaching life of that divine institution.

Jesus—It must not be forgotten that Jesus was an organizer. He organized the twelve and the seventy. He organized the multitude by seating them in companies. The last supper was well planned. He planned for the care of his loved ones. He planned and organized the world. His sufferings and crucifixion were planned, and out of them grew a mighty organization called the Church Universal. The local church, therefore, has a bounden duty to plan its work and perfect a simple organization to achieve its plans. No plan will work itself. The purpose of an organization is to work the plans. The average local church is constantly complaining that there is nothing worth while for the members to do. This is not true even in a small church.

It is true that the leaders of such churches have never

studied their community, their organization, or even the talents of the members of the church. In consequence the work that should be done is unknown and therefore has not been planned or programmed so as to provide work for all concerned. A competent organization will be able to provide work for all the members of the church and will see that the work is well and promptly done.

Questions

1. What is the essential principle in organization?
2. Explain unified control.
3. Discuss the formation and duties of the executive group.
4. Give an instance which illustrates one of the evils resulting from a lack of centralized control.
5. Name some of the goals toward which a competent church should strive.
6. Illustrate the principle of accountability.

XII

A MATTER OF MONEY

Spiritual Finance—The competent church must be financed upon a spiritual basis and plan. As long as the local church depends upon *money raising,* it will be in trouble and will in a measure fail in its divine purposes. The schemes and methods of many a church in the past have been little short of criminal. To accept exemption from taxation on the ground that the church was in the business of serving the community without profit and then unfairly to compete with merchants who have paid taxes and sell for profits, is to break the spirit of the law that allows the church its exemption from taxation. It is un-Christian.

A Hold-Up—To seek to provide church monies by means of cake sales, fairs, suppers and pay entertainments, while half the church members do not contribute to the support of their organization, also breaks the spirit of the law of God and of man. A local grocer expressed himself in this manner recently: "These churches are bad grafters. They send in two of my best customers, who demand the use of part of my store on my busy day. It is a hold-up. They know I dare not refuse them. So the women come in on a Saturday and my clerks stumble over them while they steal my wrapping paper and twine to wrap up their cakes, pies, cookies, and bread. My own stock of such things goes unsold because they are supporting their church on easy money. Later on some of those same church people will come in and ask me to be a Christian, and tell me that they love their Lord. Not for me, thank you!"

At least this is an interesting sidelight on church money-raising methods.

The Rummage Sale—The rummage sale has been a tremendous detriment to the life of many a local church. Glibly it is said, "Oh, we have to charge the poor people something for the things in order to save their self-respect." Then the church loses its own self-respect by taking the money of those poor people as profits to avoid the necessity of giving it themselves. With such wrongly produced funds they often pay the preacher, furnish the house of God, and tell other heathen about a Savior from sin. If a man undertook to clothe his wife or mother by means of profits from a rummage sale, he would become a cast-off in the community. What one would not even dream of doing for his wife or mother is done shamelessly for the Lord and Savior.

Jesus Before All—Jesus said that if any man chose wife or mother in place of Him, he could not be a disciple. He meant what He said. And all the time about half the members are living a lie. They promised to give their all to God, which included their money. They promised to give money cheerfully to support the church and its world work, and they are not doing it. They refrain from giving with the tacit approval of the church and with the connivance of its duly elected officers and pastor. Herein lies one great reason for an incompetent church.

You—The money in your life is You. If you give yourself to Christ your money goes with you or else you are not His. A Christian's money cannot be Christless. No sensible person would try with his lips alone to tell his loved ones how much he really loved them. To his words he would add the use of his money. Money talks and speaks with an unmistakable voice. If it ever comes to a question between what a man says by his words and his use of money, the average onlooker will reject the testimony of the lips and accept that given by the money.

Money provides a wonderful channel for the expres-

sion of a personality that is seeking after God and the work of world salvation. It is a medium of expression that has tremendous sweep and power. It flows readily to the far corners of the earth and enables the individual who provides it to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. It enables a person to preach the gospel in his own community because it is in God's plan to use it for the support of the preacher of the gospel in the pulpit of the giver's church. Money is very personal in its uses and in its reactions. It is essential for a true disciple to give money to his Lord, if he has any money. God must have the first part of all monies in the life. It ought to be impossible to be a church member in good standing without being a contributor of record "as God hath prospered you." The church that is competent produces a giving membership because it realizes that to live is to give.

Giving a Mandate—The giving of money is not a matter of volition, but is a mandate under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, who owns all that inheres in or belongs to every life and in a most individual manner owns the life that has offered itself to Him and is henceforth called a Christian life.

Afraid of Its Members—The average church has money aplenty for all purposes in the hands of its members. But a cowardly spirit causes many a church to refuse to help its members produce for the Lord and His work. The competent church is not afraid of its members any more than a real mother is afraid of her children. Love drives away fear. Because the competent church is a loving household of the Lord's saved people, every member must be taught to give money to God, helped to give for both current expenses and for missions and beneficences, and then encouraged to give cheerfully, regularly and proportionately. Scripture speaks of both tithes and offerings. When this giving of tithes and offerings has been brought to pass, there will be enough money in the

average local church treasury for all God's work and purposes. There will not even seem to be any need to produce money in any other way than as a personal act of worship.

Giving Is Worship—Giving ought always to be worship. It should always be an act of self-giving to God. The only money the church should seek after is the first part of that which is in the life of a believer who will give it to God because a loving sense of stewardship possesses his life. Wherever a share of the money of every church member is thus used there will be a competent church in the making.

Questions

1. On what ground only should a church accept exemption from taxation?
2. What objection is there to rummage sales, fairs and the like?
3. Explain how giving is a spiritual function.
4. Why is it that the majority of churches lack sufficient funds?
5. What beside tithes does Scripture teach should be given to God?
6. What is the relation between you and your money?

XIII

THE ENLISTMENT PROCESS

Evangelism—Enlistment includes the work of evangelism or seeking the salvation of the lost. There is no such thing as a competent church where the organization, the leadership, and the individual members have lost sight of the plan and purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ to save a world of lost sinners. That task should be the supreme objective of every local church. A true disciple of his Master must not only believe in evangelism, but must practice it. There are many ways in which one individual can be used of God to lead another soul to the Savior. Primarily the task is individual, but the mass method used on the day of Pentecost is also a tremendous factor in evangelism. Whether it is an individual act or the result of a mass movement, there must be careful preparation, a proper approach, and a very thorough and long-continued follow-up if a true evangelism is to result.

Good News—It is not good news to hear of a Savior and then fail to receive Him because not enough was heard to know how to accept Him. It is not good news to taste of the plan of salvation and then be as seed sown on stony ground that sprang up but finally died away. It is not good news, as Christ meant it to be, when one hears and receives, and then, because of neglect, there results a dwarfed, stunted and deformed life. It is because of these things that this chapter has been headed with the word "Enlistment" instead of the word "Evangelism."

An Abused Word—Evangelism is a much misunderstood, greatly abused word, as has just been indicated.

Evangelism is more a life process than an act, it is more a story of good news with many chapters, than it is a short story in one chapter. It is a story of good news in which the beginning and the end are a part of the whole and neither is complete without the other. Moreover, it is a story where every part of the narrative of good news just joins the end with the beginning and they are a completed whole because of what is in between.

Confession and Profession—The competent church will therefore be interested not alone in producing confessions of faith in Jesus Christ. It will be profoundly interested and concerned in producing a profession of faith that will be life-long and loving. Every local church should seek to raise up and train a group of personal workers skilled in bringing Jesus to the attention of other people. The minister must lead in producing this group and in maintaining the spirit of the group. Without his help and leadership, it will soon fade away. A church should constantly have public services in every department of its life where Jesus is presented to the audience and everyone is given the opportunity of publicly accepting Him. The local church should then have another group skilled in helping the converts to a good start in the Christian life. Here is where many a church woefully fails. The work of producing a confession is more or less spectacular and enthusing. The work of developing a good profession is a tedious matter that calls for patience, knowledge, love and a measure of personal responsibility that often approaches drudgery. The minister cannot do all this work and fulfill his other duties; it must be largely done by lay members if it is to be done effectively. To read with understanding the Scripture record of what followed the marvellous results of the day of Pentecost is to learn afresh what a proper enlistment is meant to produce . . . "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

A Household of Faith—A church is not designed to be a railroad station where a short stop is made while you wait to go to another. It is meant to be a household of faith where one lives and from which one goes in and out while living a worth-while life. A good home does not consist of just a sleeping room, but it also has a kitchen and dining room, a parlor, a play room, and a nursery which can be used in times of sickness and for other purposes than children's play and nurture. Then there are hallways and a cellar. But all these parts of a house are worthless without people to use them properly. Likewise the church edifice should contain quarters available for many purposes useful in enlisting the member in a life of worship, service, witnessing and giving. The church edifice is important, but of more importance are the men and women, the people that inhabit it.

Privileges and Obligations—Every member of the household should have privileges and obligations. All should have duties as well as opportunities if they are to grow. Certain of these privileges, obligations, duties and opportunities they should surely know before membership is attained. The methods of the average local church today are a travesty upon Christian enlistment. It would almost seem as if the church feared to tell the obligations of church membership for fear the person seeking membership would not enlist. But it must be realized that when a thing is made cheap and easy it is comparatively valueless, and church membership has been made so cheap and easy that it has lost its value in too many cases.

A Minimum Expectation—Several years ago a church decided not to vote upon the reception of a member until the officials had presented to every newcomer an enlistment that was a minimum expectation along worship, service and giving lines. Many of the leaders said that people would not join under such circumstances. Results proved the contrary. At the end of two years nearly

three hundred had joined that church. It was the unanimous testimony of the church officers that all who joined, when confronted with the definite standard of enlistment, responded with a statement to the effect that they were glad to know what was expected of them, and then they cheerfully enlisted. Moreover, the records of the church proved that more than ninety percent of those members were in actual participation at the end of the second year.

A Proper Enlistment—A proper enlistment provides for adequate, loving, brotherly and sisterly oversight over every member in order to encourage growth, prevent weakness, discover absence and failure and promote participation. The pastor should not be expected to do all this. He should do his share of it. Then he should help to select, train, and project a group of lay officials, men and women, of sufficient number so that a reasonable task would fall to the lot of each one and they could worthily train in worship, service, witnessing, and giving, every single member of the church. Emphasis needs to be placed upon the idea that a sufficient number of trained lay officials are necessary in order to meet the needs of the average church. An insufficient number will mean the overloading of the few. Overburdened people soon produce failure and a growing inability in the organization to do good work. A reasonable task for each officer is an incentive to do good work, and good work by the officials produces a church with a developed sense of victory.

The Ultimate Result—The competent church will tell in various ways the good news of a world Savior. It will then follow up this good news with various processes of personal and mass approach to the unsaved. It will then cultivate, teach, train, and project those who yield themselves to Jesus Christ and finally will be a decided factor in continuing all those processes of enlistment which will ultimately result in presenting each member faultless before the throne of God. An impossible

task, you say? It is not impossible under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. Even if it were impossible it is the task of a Christian to attempt it.

Questions

1. What two objectives does enlistment comprehend?
2. What are the preliminary steps leading up to evangelism?
3. How may evangelism be likened to a story?
4. What should follow a confession of faith?
5. Does it pay to tell a prospective member, before reception, of his obligations?
6. For what does a proper enlistment provide?

XIV

A BALANCED EMPHASIS

Study—In the early days of the apostolic ministry, one of the great leaders of the divine institution, when writing to another local church leader, said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." This caution is greatly needed today if we are to develop and maintain a competent church. Overemphasis of one truth or element at the expense of another tends to destroy rather than to build up.

Overemphasis—The spread of isms, the development of fanaticism, the deplorable loss of church members, and the failure to produce a well-rounded group of people who daily live their Christianity, can often be traced to an overemphasis of one splendid truth with its consequent unbalanced underemphasis of related truths. The object of the whole teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ is to fulfill the purpose expressed by the words "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

Faith and Works—It is highly dangerous for a local church to overemphasize faith and underemphasize works. No soul can ever earn salvation, for it is the gift of God in Jesus Christ, but every soul who has received that gift must work out his own salvation in fear and trembling. Faith without works is dead. Works prove that a vital faith exists. It is quite essential, therefore, to develop a church membership that will be constantly at work. Nor must works be overemphasized as against faith.

Regeneration and Salvation—Balance must be main-

tained between regeneration and salvation. Neither of these great truths must be allowed to displace the proper teaching of the other. Regeneration is an instantaneous act of God. Salvation is a life to be lived and used for the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is the outcome of regeneration, and both God and the individual have an essential part in its accomplishment.

Evangelism and Education—Evangelism and education must be properly emphasized if a well-rounded type of Christian life is to be produced. To tell souls the story of a Savior and then neglect to school them in the ways of that Savior is to destroy the value of the evangelistic act. Education alone can never produce a saved child of God, but an ignorant, undisciplined, regenerated person is a contradiction of the whole plan of God.

At Home and Abroad—To overemphasize the local work of the church and undervalue a proper relation to the world program of the Lord Christ is to produce a deformed Christian who militates against the vision and power of the whole institution. The reverse of this is equally true. To care for the trunk of the body and destroy its extremities is to ultimately destroy the value of the life itself.

A Well-Balanced Relation—A wrong emphasis can be placed upon money production, so that it becomes, in the mind of the producer, a substitute for worship and service, and even for Christian living. There needs to be a well-balanced relation between the giving, the serving, and the worshipping parts of every Christian life. Some time ago, a man was under consideration in connection with a habit he had developed of giving large sums of money to the local church, but his life failed in every other way to express any interest in Christianity. For years the church officials had gladly accepted his money, but had shown no concern about his spiritual life. "We needed the money," was their explanation and excuse. A new pastor led those officials to see their whole duty to

that man. Two of them took back a check for a large sum of money and, in a loving way, said to their fellow-member that they could no longer allow him to substitute the giving of money for a living walk with God. The men did their work wisely and well, and in consequence the man "first gave himself" to God. In the years that followed, the cause of Christ received more money from that man than ever before. He had been brought to see that a proper and balanced emphasis must be put on other things than just upon money. More emphasis needs to be put upon *the proper production of money* for God's cause. The average church is disgracefully unwise and weak in its money relations.

The Value of a Sermon—There are some preachers who place an undue emphasis upon the value of the sermon. They depend entirely upon it to produce results and allow other and related processes to lapse in the life of their church. Too much preaching and not enough work, witnessing, and giving will never develop a well-balanced life. Food is good for the body when the ration is properly selected. An unbalanced ration taken continuously without exercise and elimination destroys the body. Preaching is an essential part of the gospel process, but it must be only one part with others in a properly balanced life. It is amazing how public speech is absorbed in part only, and therefore is often misunderstood. It must, therefore, be carefully supplemented by other processes.

Personal Ministries—Machinery must never be allowed to displace ministry. People properly cared for with a minimum of machinery will produce a much stronger church than the best organized group that attempts to conduct its enterprise by means of a multiplicity of machinery and disregards its personal ministries. The average church today has multiplied organizations within its life so as to destroy its real power and unity. We must restore the balance and put the major emphasis where it belongs on a thorough personal ministry to people.

Sex Prejudices—An interview recently with an excellent but prejudiced man brought forth this statement: "In our church, we are in danger of being ruled by the women, and that will ruin it." Neither the men nor the women must rule the church. It must be conducted by a well-balanced partnership between all who are capable of leadership without regard to sex. To overemphasize man or to underemphasize woman is alike dangerous. The work needs everyone. Men sometimes have a feeling that women are displacing them today in church leadership. To the extent that it is true, it is the fault of the men. Men have habitually done a slovenly second rate job in a great many cases. Much of the present weakness in the church is due to the fact that for decades the men have controlled the institution and have not given women their proper place in the organization. The men have not attended to details, they have not been thorough, and they look too often into the future while they lose sight of the present. Women are masters of detail and they are persistently thorough. The church needs to balance the qualities of manhood with the gifts of womanhood. Each sex is needed. They need each other. There is no cause or room for jealousy, and a competent church will set its house in such order that both men and women in balanced positions will fill their proper place without overemphasis in either direction.

Generalities versus the Concrete—Generalities have been overemphasized at the cost of the concrete. For instance, a church is often called upon to "pray this week for the unsaved." Such an appeal will not lodge in many hearts. The appeal needs to be concreted and some one or more individual names become the object of each person's prayer. The concreting of missionary enterprises in terms of men and women and work to be done with necessary costs attached seems eminently wise as an educational and sales demonstration. Africa is a generality, but Mary Slessor of Calabar is a concrete fact. Concreting should

not be carried to the point where local churches are sold a single project in one place instead of having a part in the whole work around the world.

A Balanced Way—The opportunities of the average local church are large. There is need of a church that is not ignorant, unbalanced or fanatical, but pursues the even tenor of its upward way because the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in Jesus Christ is fed to the whole people in a balanced way. Such a church will make rapid progress on the highroad to efficiency.

Questions

1. What bad results follow from the overemphasis of one truth at the expense of others?
2. Relate works to faith.
3. Distinguish between regeneration and salvation.
4. To what does overemphasis of money production lead?
5. Why is preaching insufficient in itself?
6. Is elaborate machinery of organization desirable? Why?
7. Should men or women take the lead in church affairs? How may each supplement the other?
8. What is said about concreting?

XV

SOME MINOR ELEMENTS

Minor Elements—This discussion of the elements essential to the making of a competent church has thus far dealt with major matters. In order to cover the whole ground some minor elements must be given specific consideration, even though it might be taken for granted that the minor elements to be considered now are involved in some that have already been discussed.

A Lack of Individual Attention—For instance, the members of a church need to be considered individually. Too many churches deal only with the mass. That is to say, they have not conducted the enterprise with the individual in mind. In many a local church a member can fail to attend worship services for years and not be individually missed because a good audience is in attendance. This lack of individual attention becomes a cause of serious loss in the course of time. There can never be a really competent church until each person in the membership is given individual attention in order to develop a personal spiritual efficiency. Such individual attention cannot be given by the minister in any church where there are more than seventy-five members. Other paid workers cannot produce the desired result. The minister or his assistants must train and project lay leaders who will give this attention to every individual, and these lay officers must have a worthy sense of accountability to their ministerial leader.

Democracy—Another element that the competent church in-the-making needs to consider is commonly called democracy. Used in relation to the conduct of a local

church, it means that the authority, the obligations and the privileges must be democratized and shared by every individual so that the voice, the will, the resources, and the presence of every member contribute to the welfare of the whole. When half or less of the church members support the institution with their money and the other half become pauperized by a failure to do their share, the element of democracy has been destroyed. Dangers and loss are ahead. Where a small group control the policies of the church and their will is law, so that the remainder of the church membership do not know what is going on, a vital factor in church life is being destroyed. It is often alleged that the small group in control are the persons really interested and were forced to take hold because others would not lend themselves to the interests of the organization. That might be true for a short while under certain emergencies. If it continues long, it breeds an autocracy in place of the needed spirit of democracy. A competent church must develop a spirit of democracy in all its life and government. The spirit of Christianity is in the spirit of true democracy.

Adventure—The element of adventure is greatly needed in the life of the average local church. Ruts are everywhere, and in many cases the ruts are so deep that only a spirit of Christlike adventure will enable the organization to get out of its present inefficient condition. Old fogey notions and outworn practices cannot be left behind unless the spirit of adventure leads the local church to make fresh applications of basic truths in ways that will command the attention of people. The failure of many a church to use its property in a worth-while way to provide a program suited to the needs of its community is nothing short of folly and shame. A church needs the spirit of adventure in order to provide a modernized program of practical Christian service and ministry. This often requires courage of a high order which seemingly the local body does not possess. If possessed by some

individuals it is used in other walks of life and left out of the most vital concern of life, which is the conduct of the Christian enterprise.

The Social Element—The social element cannot be wisely disregarded in the life of a competent church. The New Testament plan was based upon the idea that a local church was a household of faith. Its unity and impact must, therefore, depend upon the development of such social graces as are essential to a normal life. Wholesome relaxation, whole-hearted play and good entertainment should be part and parcel of the life of every church. In the past there has been much activity along these lines, but most of it was a chase after dollars rather than part of the ministry of the church. The church should provide in its budget ample funds for all the needed social life for all its departments and for the membership as a whole. No affairs of a social or entertaining character should be allowed for the purpose of providing funds for the use of any part of the institution.

Salesmanship—Salesmanship is a greatly needed element in the conduct of a local church. Some simple laws of good salesmanship should be learned by every minister and every lay church official. "Know your goods" is a splendid starting point. Be thoroughly sold yourself is the next step. Then have a good selling talk. Know how and when to take your order. Then know how to take your departure in order that you may find the way open when it is necessary to come back. This last point involves the need of not over-selling your customer. The church of Jesus Christ has the most wonderful product in the world, which is needed by everyone all the time. It is surrounded by multitudes who do not have what it possesses, the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, essential for salvation from sin and the only means of attaining eternal life with God the Father. The competent church will know how to impart its wonderful good news.

A Positive Element—One final matter needs to be con-

sidered here, and that is the positive element. Negatives will not carry a person very far, but a positive direction is most valuable and helpful. There are many ills in the world and in the individual life which can never be uprooted except as some positive good is revealed, and then built into the individual and the social structure of which he is a part. "Thou shalt not" may be effective once in a while. "This do and thou shalt live" is much more effective and enduring.

A church with a positive program applied to life and backed by individuals who are positive examples of the value of that program will be the competent church both now and in the days to come.

Questions

1. How is it possible to give individual attention to each church member?
2. Relate democracy to the local church.
3. Is it wise for a small group to control the policies of a church?
4. Of what value to a church is the spirit of adventure?
5. Should social life be divorced from money raising in the church? Why?
6. Discuss salesmanship as it applies to the local church.
7. What has the church to impart to others?

XVI

BARRIERS

All the Barriers—A constructive discussion of the competent church could not disregard the barriers that must be faced, and from time to time some of them have been alluded to in the previous pages. Now it is desirable to face them all in a unified presentation. In doing this it will not be possible to fully analyze the barriers.

Salvation—The first of these barriers or hindrances to a competent church is the prevailing misconception concerning salvation and its relation to the purpose of a local church. If church members are to be properly appreciated it will be because they are regenerated and understand, therefore, that salvation is a life to be lived. That life will be lived in such a Christ-like manner as to prove that regeneration has taken place. The church in consequence, offers such a true believer a unique and essential base of operations. From such a church will emerge a regenerated soul who, in company with other like-minded souls, will heed the command, "Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling."

Church Membership and Salvation—The church is not heaven. It is not a guarantee of heaven. It is a place for believers. Church membership is a dangerous place for a taster or an unsaved seeker after God, because membership for any but believers is unscriptural and misleading. Salvation is not like a paid-up insurance policy which is of no present value, but becomes valuable only when death ensues. In some respects it is like an insurance policy which will mature when death ensues but has immediate value if constantly renewed by payment of

premiums, but which lapses unless such premiums are constantly paid.

Emotionalism—The second barrier or hindrance to a competent church is in the prevailing overemphasis on emotionalism. Much of the evangelism that produces many of the present-day converts is an appeal to the emotions based on mob psychology, and members produced under such conditions find it hard to learn the quiet humdrum ways of an average local church. Much of present-day preaching is an appeal to the emotions instead of being based upon truth presented in a good pedagogic manner. The emotions can wisely be appealed to, providing the will and the mind have been reached or are being reached. Much money-raising is still done by using an emotional appeal. In the long run such money is costly because, as time goes on, the soul only produces when under emotional stress. Emotional stress is like the effects of a drug. If its use is continued, more and more of it must be used or the effects produced are unsatisfactory. Too often we lose the chance to make a good steward because by emotional processes we aim to produce immediately a large collection.

"That There Be No Collections When I Come"—Years ago, a man attended a service where missionary stories were being told, to be followed by the usual collection. The closing story was the speaker's experience in leading a little cripple girl to her Savior. Then followed a description of how, soon thereafter, she went home to God. The emotions of the audience were aroused to fever pitch. At that point the collection plates were passed. A large collection, it must not be called an offering, was the result. Early the next morning a man called upon the speaker and narrated that he had a little cripple girl in his own home, and under the stress of emotion, with two weeks' wages in his pocket, he had put it all in the collection. He said that pay day would not come again for two weeks. In the meantime he was without

friends or credit, and the little girl needed medicine and food. Then he asked for the return of part of his contribution. That speaker gave it all back to the man and discontinued the practice of raising money on the basis of emotionalism.

Wise Use of Emotion—Occasionally the use of emotion may be wise in the production of an offering. God wants a love that is true enough in a normal life to calmly produce right decisions and coolly separate just proportions of money and use them for His purposes. A profession of faith may have behind it some emotion, but in it must be a clear, calm recognition of sin, and the quiet decision to be converted must be followed by a steady walk with Jesus along His road.

Unreality—Somewhat akin to the last barrier or hindrance is the next one to be discussed. It is unreality. Christianity is unreal to many church members because they fail to apply it to everyday life. It seems to concern a future and impracticable idealism rather than today's living. In many cases Christianity seems to consist of splendid principles which are not practiced. They are good to say over to one's self, but too hard to do. Such things as prayer, stewardship, witnessing and worship are theories or idealisms which it is quite proper to talk about but which a person is not really expected to practice except upon special occasions. The practices taught in Christianity are supposed to be good, it is true, but good for the hereafter only. In consequence, many a church member tries to live a many-sided life. He has one set of actions for church, another for business, another for home, and yet another set for social relaxations. We can never have a competent church until Christianity becomes real to every member in every phase of life.

Precedents—Precedents are a great barrier in the average church. Many a situation is determined absolutely upon the basis of "we have always done it that way."

The question of whether that way of doing it is right and produces good results is not allowed to enter into the question. "We have never done it that way," "Father never did it that way, and the way father did it is good enough for us," has spoiled many a hopeful prospect of producing a competent church. This is true just as often in a big city church as in a remote rural parish.

Bible Methods Few—A study of the Scriptures makes it plain that very few detailed methods are given there, and the reason might well be that while principles do not change, methods may change. The local church is largely left to adopt such methods as will enable it to do its work well, and thereby produce a competent church. But again and again precedents about receiving members, producing money, educational processes, women officials and ministerial duties act as an absolute barrier today to competent church life. The average church is slow to change from an incompetent, unscriptural practice to one that will produce results.

Pride of Numbers—Pride of numbers or the size of the church is often a great barrier to a competent church. Recently a church of 2,317 listed members made a careful survey of their rolls. The officers were able to find some trace of about 1,200 of that number. But for many years it had been their proud boast that they were the largest church in their city and in their State. They declined, therefore, to clean up their membership because they would lose their false standing as the biggest church. A big congregation does not always mean a competent church. In many cases the methods used to produce a crowd destroy the possibilities of making a competent church. Pride of having a crowd hinders the production of a worthwhile church.

Contests—The prevailing contests between groups in different churches in various cities often destroy any hope of producing a really competent church. Such con-

tests lead to a false pride. One group may have a person who is a promoter and in consequence the normal course of many a regular group is interfered with for weeks by methods that rob one class or church to build up temporarily the other one in the contest. When the contest is over, the so-called recruits rapidly disappear. It is true that a small percentage may remain. Other and wiser methods would have attracted and held them to better advantage. Abnormal methods are a barrier to a competent church because they cannot be sustained and they injure other churches nearby.

Over-Organization—Over-organization is really a lack of organization and constitutes a hindrance or barrier to a competent church. The clicking of much machinery can never take the place of a group of spiritually-minded church workers. Nor will the mere appointment of a multitude of officers and committees by numerous segments of a church produce a competent organization, for, working at cross purposes and in confusion, they can never enable the divine institution to meet its situation and develop a simple, unified, competent membership. Unification and correlation must take the place of over-organization.

Ignorance and Haste—Ignorance and haste go hand in hand as hindrances to a competent church. Many a church member is almost totally ignorant concerning Christianity and the duties of a church member. Oftentimes so much haste is indulged in when rushing the person into membership that there is no time even to give instruction in the basic beliefs. Belief is a matter of the heart and life more than it is a speech. "By life" the word was originally. In consequence of misunderstanding about belief too often the lips say some words which the life never attempts to corroborate by daily actions. It is not a Christian practice to rush people into an organization that involves them in duties and obligations when they have not been previously informed about

those duties and obligations. Generalities are not sufficient in such a situation.

Fanaticism—Many a local church has suffered tremendously because haste in receiving untaught members has produced an ignorant membership which refused to worship, serve or give. Instead they express their poor and groping upreach in idleness, fanaticism, covetousness and intolerance of others who know more of God and His Word. Teaching, therefore, must help all to seek higher standards of living and a disciplined sense of Christian competency. Fanaticism is a product of ignorance and haste, while a balanced Christian life is a product of knowing and then doing.

Battle Being Won—There are many barriers, someone will say. Yes, there are many, but the battle to overcome them is already being won when we frankly face them. Plans can then be fully made to conquer them all. They can be conquered. They are being conquered. They will all be largely conquered sooner or later so that the divine institution will be thoroughly competent for its world task. The Christian enterprise does not produce a spirit of pessimism, but a spirit of victory. Christianity is never afraid of the truth.

Questions

1. Why is the church a place for true believers only?
2. Why is the raising of money by emotional appeal censured?
3. In what way is Christianity unreal to many church members?
4. Is it wise to use precedent as a standard? Give reasons.
5. Why did the Scriptures deal so briefly with methods?
6. How is pride of numbers a barrier to competency?
7. To what does ignorance and haste in receiving members lead?

XVII

THE METHODS

Spiritual Life First—The church that desires to be competent will give primary consideration to the development of its spiritual life, but will likewise give sufficient attention to methods in order to fill its sphere adequately by using all its available resources and personnel. The cardinal rule of every local church must be "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." When this rule has been properly observed, methods will not be improperly used.

Some Bible Methods—The New Testament has given us very few methods, and what are given there are simple and general, as if the purpose was to allow adaptation for changing conditions. There is the method of dealing with a crowd by a division into small companies. The method of two by two visitation is found in the New Testament. The same authority has given us a financial method in, "On the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered you that there be no collections when I come." A prayer method is suggested for times of trouble, such as when Peter was cast into prison or preparation was being made for a great revival as at Pentecost. There are also some simple processes offered as methods of discipline. The local church is clearly within the spirit and the letter of Scriptural teaching, therefore, when simple, effective methods are introduced in compliance with the injunction, "Let everything be done decently and in order." A few such methods are, therefore, suggested here.

A Survey—An essential method is a survey. A well-

made survey discovers a church to itself. Hidden resources are revealed. Unknown weaknesses are located. Failures are brought to light and strength along certain lines is found available for tasks that confront the church. No church can fulfill its task until not only the inside of the organization has been surveyed, but the community in all its aspects around the church has been thoroughly scrutinized. Facts are essential for a competent church, and only a survey reveals them.

A Group Organization—Another essential method is to locate responsibility through a simple group organization, and then by proper oversight develop a sense of accountability. The group plan has passed the experimental stage and has become one of the most valuable methods to use in caring for a church membership and giving them help for personal development and utilization.

A Unified Budget—A unified budget for scientifically financing the current expenses and missionary needs of the church is demonstrating its ability to meet the needs of the local church situation. This unified budget is made up in two sections, one section presenting in detail the local expenses, the other presenting the share of the church in the denominational tasks. These two parts of a budget must never be thrown into one any more than the two lungs should be congested together. They must be presented to the subscriber at the same time. Each giver should be taught to properly divide his giving so that it is balanced and proportionate. Therefore each one making a subscription should say how much he will give for current expenses and how much for missions and beneficence.

An Every Member Plan—The approach for the subscription to every church member should be made by means of an annual Every Member Plan. Pledges should not be made for more than a year in advance. This method is now thoroughly established in thousands of local churches, and when properly carried out, produces

splendid results. When it fails, it is often due to three causes, too much haste in preparing the budget, too little time given to preparing the membership, and then a failure to make it really an Every Member plan.

Annual Enlistment—A splendid method for enlisting the church member is to have an annual enlistment week, when every one is asked to say where they may be counted on to work during the coming year in the program of the church. Also to indicate what worship services they will endeavor to attend with more or less regularity.

New Members—Another enlistment method is to confront all incoming members with a definite enlistment card before presenting their names to the church to be voted upon. Many sad experiences prove that once they are in the membership of the church, over half of the members never can be reached and helped to maintain a worthy standard of worship, service, and giving.

A Church Night Plan—The church night plan has proved very helpful to a large number of local churches. Supper is served at cost price in the church so that people can come direct from business to the church. After the meal, the next two and a half hours are filled with a variety of activities which may include a social period, officers' and teachers' meetings, some study groups, and then a period for a devotional meeting. Such a plan saves the time of busy people and produces a larger attendance, because it offers a variety of opportunity for service, devotion, study, and social relaxation.

A Church School—A church school is a good method for interesting the church constituency in the study of missions or some other subjects, such as normal courses in Bible School pedagogy, or stewardship, or church efficiency or the study of some book in the Bible. Such a school can meet either on a given night each week for six or seven weeks or else meet each night during a whole week. Many people will join such a church school, and

the local church is thereby made more intelligent for its tasks.

Training Councils—Church officers' clinics or training councils have proven to be an effective method for producing competent church officials. These clinics are usually conducted by the pastor. A book is used as the basis of instruction, because very often some things must be said which might offend some of those present, but when read from a book cannot cause estrangement between the pastor and some over-sensitive or self-centered official. Where there are a number of churches in a community it is often found profitable to conduct these officers' councils under the direction of the ministers' conference with or without some outside assistance. Church officers are eager for such opportunities when the instruction is of a worth-while character.

Plays and Pageants—A most helpful method of teaching missions or stewardship is to make use of the plays and pageants that are now available. These can be procured at small cost through any missionary headquarters, or from the publication houses of the various denominations.

A Women's Union—The women of the church will find a Women's Union to be a most unifying and helpful method for organizing and utilizing the women of the church. The women as an organized group are gradually leaving the field of money-raising and finding a new sphere in the educational, social and ministry work of the church. For many years church women have been divided into separate groups called Aid Societies, Mission Societies, Sewing Circles and similar names. Money-raising has been one of their chief objectives, while the work of ministry has been sadly lacking in many a local church. Today, however, the tide has turned, and women are being given a proper share in the major financial operations of the whole church. In consequence their energies in the women's work are being turned into splen-

did channels that give large promise for the intelligence and dynamic of the future church. While seeking dollars, the church lost people, but now that people are being sought and won, their money will be produced by the practice and teaching of the whole church life.

Bibliography—Full details concerning all the methods mentioned here will be found in one or more of the books listed in the bibliography. Any good method in accord with the teaching and spirit of God's Word that will produce unity of practice and life should be used by a competent local church. Methods that will raise the average intelligence of the membership are needed in every church. Whatever will encourage participation in worship, service, witnessing and giving should become a method in the average local church. Again the note of caution must be sounded lest a method lose its basis of personal ministry and a machine be developed instead of encouraging a proper personal relation in every life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Impact of the Whole—The competent church is a church wherein the members worship, serve, witness, and give with more or less regularity, and upon a scale that enables the whole organization to increase its impact upon the community, the world and the inner life of its own individual members. Then God is honored, souls are saved, and the kingdom of God is brought nearer this earth and God's people. Inherently the local church is competent to fulfill its tasks. With common sense and a practical use of inherent powers we must do the work of our Lord through the local church. It would not have been instituted if it had not been amply endowed with every needed grace and power. A call to Victory for God is sounded afresh.

Questions

1. Of what use is a survey?
2. What can be said of the group plan?

3. Give the benefits of a unified budget.
4. Give three reasons for the possible failure of the unified budget plan.
5. Give two methods by which members may be enlisted.
6. Discuss the Church Night plan.
7. What is the purpose of the church school? of the church officers' clinic?
8. How may the women be best organized?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Manual of Church Methods.....Agar
A Modern Church Program.....McGarrah
An Efficient Church.....Doney
Church Music.....Lorenz
Church Officers.....Agar
Churches of Distinction in Town and Country..DeS Brunner
Dead or Alive.....Agar
Help Those Women.....Agar
Leadership.....Slattery
Making a Missionary Church.....Warburton
Modern Church Finance.....McGarrah
Modern Church Management.....McGarrah
Modern Money Methods.....Agar
Money the Acid Test.....McConoughy
Money Talks.....McGarrah
New Church for a New Time.....Harper
New Layman for a New Time.....Harper
New Tasks for Old Churches.....Babson
Pastoral and Personal Evangelism.....Goodell
Principles of Church Advertising.....Stelzle
Stewardship Starting Points.....Calkins
Tested Methods in Town and Country.....DeS Brunner
The Bible Class and the Community.....Cross
The Church School.....Athearn
The Christian and His Money Problem.....Wilson
The Deacon at Work.....Agar
The Larger Stewardship.....Cook
The Stewardship of Life.....Agar
The Teaching Task of the Church.....Compiled

It is not intended that this list of books should cover the entire range of subjects discussed in this volume. Each of the books mentioned in this list has, however, some particular relation to this discussion.

CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

ROGER W. BABSON

The Future of the Churches

Historic and Economic Facts. $1.00

MR. BABSON shows in a constructive way how the future prosperity and achievement of the church are dependent on its ability to enter fully into the manifold life of the people, and stand as firmly for social and civic righteousness as for the meeting and supplying distinctly spiritual needs.

Pres. WILLIAM ALLEN HARPER

Author of "The New Church For The New Time" etc.

The Church in the Present Crisis $1.75

Dr. Harper's new book is a refreshing, stimulating antidote to the host of works concerning the church's failure and of mankind's growing worse and worse year by year. Dr. Harper is fully aware of what the church lacks and of the necessity for new methods and fresh life and he discusses various *modus operandi* which should lead to a larger increase of usefulness and power.

P. E. BURROUGHS *Author of "The Present-Day Sunday School."*

Building a Successful Sunday School

$1.50

A valuable study of means and methods from the adoption of which the best results may be looked for, in the management of a large school. Dr. Burroughs writes out of a large experience, and his suggestions and plans of management are of an unusually valuable sort.

ROBERT F. Y. PIERCE *International Illustrator*

Blackboard Efficiency

Illustrated $1.50

A new book by the author of "Pictured Truth" and "Pencil Points" contains a new wealth of lessons on both the Old and New Testaments with sketches for blackboard work. The simplicity and charm of Dr. Pierce's work is well known. His "Chalk Sketches" are so simple that any teacher can draw them, yet wonderfully pointed and helpful in bringing out the essence of the lessons.

ROGER W. BABSON — *Author of "Fundamentals of Prosperity," etc.*

New Tasks for Old Churches

Cloth, $1.00. Paper, ✠ 60c.

Suggestions for the solution of to-day's problems, clear-cut and courageous. Babson has little sympathy with the arguments of self-interest of business men or with the outworn methods of the church in industrial communities. His sole interest is in the physical, social, and spiritual salvation of the men, women, and children in our industrial centres.

PRES. WILLIAM ALLEN HARPER

Author of "The New Church For The New Time" etc.

The Church in the Present Crisis

$1.75.

Hon. Josephus Daniels says: "Dr. Harper has ably presented the demand that the church shape the thought and life of the future. The world, having tried everything else, is becoming convinced that no Golden Rule alone will be the savior. Dr. Harper wisely stresses study of the Bible, the Christian leaven in education, the duty to look difficult problems in the face and solve them by application of the Christian religion. It is a book of faith with wise directions and guidance.

REV. ALBERT F. McGARRAH

Author of "Modern Church Management."

Money Talks

Stimulating Studies in Christian Stewardship. $1.25.

Ministers and laymen, who desire to present convincingly the principles and practices which should govern Christians in getting and using money, will find here a wealth of fresh material, popular in style, yet deeply inspiring in tone. A companion volume to "Modern Church Finance" and "Modern Church Management."

LYMAN EDWYN DAVIS, D.D., LL.D.

Editor "Methodist Recorder."

Democratic Methodism in America

A Topical Survey of the Methodist Protestant Church. $1.50.

A history of the Methodist Protestant church from its founding in 1830, pointing out the various links in the chain of circumstances which lead to the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church and the fundamental principles which prompted and justified the movement. It constitutes a vigorous and ably-argued plea for "mutual-rights" Methodism.

FRANK L. BROWN

Late Gen'l Sec. World S. S. Association, American Section.

Plans for Sunday School Evangelism

New Edition with Introduction by Marion Lawrance. $1.50.

"This book is 'chock-full' of rare good sense. No pastor, superintendent or Sunday school teacher should fail to read and remember its vital message. The worth-while methods suggested will be most helpful."—*Sunday School Worker.*

MARY FOSTER BRYNER

The Elementary (or Children's) Division

Organized for Service. 60c.

A new revised edition of this useful handbook of which *The Augsburg Teacher* said: "From beginning to end it is practical in matters of deepest and largest concern. Its suggestions are applicable to the smallest schools. It treats of the four departments in the Elementary Division, the Cradle Roll, Beginners,' Primary and Junior, from birth to the teens. In it we have the best.

E. L. MIDDLETON

General Secretary, Sunday School Department, Baptist State Convention, N. C.

Building a Country Sunday School

With diagrams. Paper, net 60c; Cloth, $1.25.

"Here is a book that ought to make a great appeal and have a great sale. Treats of grading, department work, teachers and officers, etc., with a clear conception of the problems."—*Herald of Gospel Liberty.*

HOWARD P. YOUNG

Pastor, Methodist Episcopal Church, Woodward, Iowa.

The Youth of Today in the Life of Tomorrow

$1.50.

Mr. Young examines the relation of the life of the up-growing generation to the Church, under the home, school, college and community aspects, based on an experience grown out of a twenty-five year pastorate, and investigations carried on during that period.

DATE DUE

BV 652 .A38 1924

Agar, Frederick Alfred, 1872

The competent church

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BV652.A38 1924
Agar, Frederi The competent church :
3 0645 0005 1367 7